

ADVENTURES
ON THE
COLUMBIA RIVER,
INCLUDING
THE NARRATIVE OF A RESIDENCE
OF SIX YEARS ON THE WESTERN SIDE OF
THE ROCKY MOUNTAINS,
AMONG
VARIOUS TRIBES OF INDIANS
HITHERTO UNKNOWN:
TOGETHER WITH
A JOURNEY ACROSS THE AMERICAN CONTINENT.
BY ROSS COX.
IN TWO VOLUMES.
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TO
THE RIGHT HONORABLE
LORD FRANCIS LEVESON GOWER,
&c. &c.

THESE VOLUMES
ARE RESPECTFULLY DEDICATED,
AS A SLIGHT TRIBUTE OF RESPECT FOR HIS LORDSHIP'S
CHARACTER AS A MAN, HIS TALENTS AS A POET,
AND
HIS CONSISTENCY AS A STATESMAN ;

BY
HIS LORDSHIP'S OBEDIENT HUMBLE SERVANT,

THE AUTHOR.

P R E F A C E.

THE following Narrative embraces a period of six years, five of which were spent among various tribes on the banks of the Columbia River and its tributary streams ; and the remaining portion was occupied in the voyage outwards, and the journey across the continent.

During this period the Author ascended the Columbia nine times, and descended it eight ; wintered among various tribes ; was engaged in several encounters with the Indians ; was lost fourteen days in a wilderness, and had many other extraordinary escapes.

He kept journals of the principal events which occurred during the greater part of this period, the substance of which will be found embodied in the following pages. Those who love to read of "battle, murder, and sudden death," will, in his description of the dangers and privations to which the life of an Indian trader is subject, find much to gratify their taste; while to such as are fond of nature, in its rudest and most savage forms, he trusts his sketches of the wild and wandering tribes of Western America may not be found uninteresting.

They cannot lay claim to the beautiful colouring which the romantic pen of a Chateaubriand has imparted to his picture of Indian manners; for the Author, unfortunately, did not meet with any tribe which approached that celebrated writer's splendid description of savage life. He has seen many of them before the contamination of white men could have deteriorated their native

character; and, while he records with pleasure the virtues and bravery of some, truth compels him to give a different character to the great majority.

The press has of late years teemed with various “ Recollections,” “ Reminiscences,” &c. of travels, scenes, and adventures in *well known* countries, but no account has been yet published of a great portion of the remote regions alluded to in this Work. They are therefore new to the world; and, if the Author’s unpretending narrative possesses no other claim to the public favor, it cannot at least be denied that of novelty.

INTRODUCTION.

IN the year 1670 a charter was granted by Charles the Second to the Hudson's Bay Company, whose first governor was Prince Rupert, by which the Company was allowed the exclusive privilege of establishing trading factories on the shores of that noble bay and its tributary rivers. Owing to this charter the fur-trade, which forms an important and extensive branch of American commerce, was for a long period monopolised by the Company ; but, from the peculiar nature of its constitution, little progress was made by its officers in extending its trading posts, or exploring the interior, until the year 1770, when Mr. Hearne was sent on an expedition to the Arctic Sea, for an account of which I beg to refer the reader to that gentleman's simple and interesting narrative.

While Canada belonged to France the Canadian traders had advanced many hundred miles beyond Lake Superior, and established several trading posts in the heart of the country, some of which the *voyageurs* still call by their original names; such as Fort Dauphin, Fort Bourbon, and others.

The conquest of that province opened a new source of trade to British enterprise; and while the officers of the Hudson's Bay Company fancied their charter had secured them in the undisturbed possession of their monopoly, an active and enterprising rival was gradually encroaching on their territories, and imperceptibly undermining their influence with the Indians; I allude to the North-West Fur Company of Canada, which originally consisted of a few private traders, but subsequently became the first commercial establishment in British America.

It is not here necessary to enter into a detail of the formation and increase of this Company. Its first members were British and Canadian merchants; among whom Messrs. Rocheblave, Frobisher, Fraser, M'Tavish, Mackenzie, and M'Gillivray were the most prominent. Their clerks were

chiefly younger branches of respectable Scottish families, who entered the service as apprentices for seven years ; for which period they were allowed one hundred pounds, and suitable clothing. At the expiration of their apprenticeship they were placed on yearly salaries, varying from eighty to one hundred and sixty pounds, and according to their talents were ultimately provided for as partners ; some, perhaps, in a year or two after the termination of their engagements ; while others remained ten, twelve, or sixteen years in a state of probation.

This system, by creating an identity of interest, produced a spirit of emulation among the clerks admirably calculated to promote the general good ; for, as each individual was led to expect that the period for his election to the proprietary depended on his own exertions, every nerve was strained to attain the long-desired object of his wishes.

Courage was an indispensable qualification, not merely for the casual encounters with the Indians, but to intimidate any competitor in trade with whom he might happen to come in collision.

Success was looked upon as the great criterion of a trader's cleverness; and provided he obtained for his outfit of merchandise what was considered a good return of furs, the partners never stopped to inquire about the means by which they were acquired.

The Hudson's Bay Company, on the contrary, presented no such inducements to extra exertion on the part of its officers. Each individual had a fixed salary, without any prospect of becoming a proprietor; and some of them, whose courage was undoubted, when challenged to single combat by a Nor-Wester, refused; alleging as a reason, that they were engaged to trade for furs, and not to fight with fellow-subjects!

Independently of the foregoing circumstances, the North-West Company in the selection of its canoe-men, or, as they are called, *engagés*, had another great advantage over its chartered rival. These men were French Canadians, remarkable for obedience to their superiors; and whose skill in managing canoes, capability of enduring hardship, and facility of adapting themselves to the habits and peculiarities of the various tribes, ren-

dered them infinitely more popular in the eyes of the Indians than the stubborn, unbending, matter-of-fact Orkney men, into whose ideas a work of supererogation never entered.*

The diminished amount of their imports, joined to the increased demand of goods from their factories, at length opened the eyes of the Hudson's Bay directors to the success of their formidable opponents, and induced them to attempt, when too late, to arrest their career. By their charter they now laid claim to the exclusive privilege of trading, not merely on the English River and its various branches, but also on the Saskatchewan, Red River, and all the other streams which empty themselves into the great Lake Winepic, the waters of which are carried to Hudson's Bay by the rivers Nelson and Severn.

This territorial claim, unsupported by any physical power, had but little weight with their persevering rivals. They were far beyond the reach of magisterial authority; and an injunction could

* The chief part of the boatmen and several of the officers of the Hudson's Bay Company were, formerly, natives of the Orkney Islands.

not be easily served, nor obedience to it enforced in a country fifteen hundred or two thousand miles beyond the limits of any recognised jurisdiction.

After establishing opposition trading posts adjoining the different factories of the Hudson's Bay Company in the interior, the indefatigable Nor-Westers continued their progress to the northward and westward, and formed numerous trading establishments at Athabasca, Peace River, Great and Lesser Slave Lakes, New Caledonia, the Columbia, &c. ; to none of which places did the officers of the Hudson's Bay attempt to follow them. By these means the North-West Company became undisputed masters of the interior. Their influence with the natives was all-powerful ; and no single trader, without incurring imminent danger from the Indians, or encountering the risk of starvation, could attempt to penetrate into their territories.

A few independent individuals, unconnected with either company, the chief of whom was Mr. John Jacob Astor, a wealthy merchant of New York, still carried on a fluctuating trade with the Indians, whose lands border Canada and the United States ;

but their competition proved injurious to themselves, as prices far above their value were frequently given to the natives for their furs.

With the interior thus inaccessible, and the confines not worth disputing, Mr. Astor turned his thoughts to the opposite side of the American continent; and accordingly made proposals to the North-West Company to join with him in forming an establishment on the Columbia River. This proposition was submitted to the consideration of a general meeting of the wintering proprietors; and, after some negotiations as to the details, rejected.

Mr. Astor therefore determined to make the attempt without their co-operation; and in the winter of 1809 he succeeded in forming an association called the "Pacific Fur Company," of which he himself was the chief proprietor. As able and experienced traders were necessary to ensure success, he induced several of the gentlemen connected with the North-West Company to quit that establishment and join in his speculation. Among these was Mr. Alexander M'Kay, an old partner, who had accompanied Sir Alex-

ander Mackenzie in his perilous journey across the continent to the Pacific Ocean.

It was intended in the first instance to form a trading establishment at the entrance of the Columbia, and as many more subsequently on its tributary streams as the nature and productions of the country would admit. It was also arranged that a vessel laden with goods for the Indian trade should sail every year from New York to the Columbia, and after discharging her cargo at the establishment, take on board the produce of the year's trade, and thence proceed to Canton, which is a ready market for furs of every description. On disposing of her stock of peltries at the latter place, she was to return to New York freighted with the productions of China.

The first vessel fitted out by the Pacific Fur Company was the *Tonquin*, commanded by Captain Jonathan Thorne, formerly a lieutenant in the service of the United States. She sailed from New York in the autumn of 1810, and had on board four partners, nine clerks, with a number of mechanics and *voyageurs*, with a large and well assorted cargo for the Indian and Chinese trades.

Much about the same period a party under the command of Messrs. W. P. Hunt, and Donald Mackenzie, left Saint Louis on the Missouri, with the intention of proceeding as nearly as possible by Lewis and Clarke's route across the continent to the mouth of the Columbia. This party consisted, besides the above gentlemen, who were partners, of three clerks, and upwards of seventy men.

The following year, 1811, another vessel, the *Beaver*, of four hundred and eighty tons, commanded by Captain Cornelius Sowles, sailed for the Columbia. She had on board one partner, six clerks, and a number of artisans and *voyageurs*, with a plentiful supply of every thing that could contribute to the comfort of the crew and passengers.

The exaggerated reports then in circulation relative to the wealth to be obtained in the Columbia induced merchants of the first respectability to solicit for their sons appointments in the new Company; and many of their applications were unsuccessful. The Author, who was at this period in New York, captivated with the love of novelty,

and the hope of speedily realising an independence in the supposed *El Dorada*, exerted all his influence to obtain a clerkship in the Company. He succeeded, and was one of those who embarked on board the *Beaver*.

With what success his golden anticipations were crowned, together with all his "travels' history," will be amply detailed in the following Narrative.

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A

SIX YEARS' RESIDENCE

ON

THE BANKS OF

THE COLUMBIA RIVER,

&c.

CHAPTER I.

Singularly luminous appearance of the ocean—The Equator—Magellanic clouds—Falkland islands—Storm; and loss of two men—Cape Horn—Dreadful storm—Islands of Juan Fernandez and Massafuero—Trade winds in the Pacific—A shark—Arrival at Sandwich Islands.

ON Thursday the 17th of October, 1811, we sailed from New York, with a gentle breeze from the northward, and in a few hours lost sight of the high lands of "Never Sink." Our cabin passengers were, Messrs. Clarke, Clapp, Halsey, Nicolls, Seton, Ehninger, and self; with Captain Sowles,

and Messrs. Rhodes, Champenois and Dean, officers of the ship.

Nothing particular occurred until the night of the 7th of November, when we were gratified with observing the ocean assume that fiery appearance mentioned by several of our circumnavigators; to account for which has not a little perplexed the most erudite inquirers into marine phenomena. During our passage through these liquid flames we had what sailors term a “smacking breeze” of eight knots. The captain declared that he had never witnessed so luminous an appearance of the sea; and so great was the light afforded by the waves, that we were thereby enabled to peruse books of a moderate sized print!

On the following day, the 8th, we made the Cape de Verds, at which place it was the captain's intention to stop for a day or two; but the wind being favourable he relinquished the idea, and kept under way. We had fine gales and pleasant weather until the 17th, on which day we crossed the Equator, in longitude 30° west, with a light northerly breeze, which on the following day subsided into a dead calm: this calm con-

tinued eight days, during which period we did not advance ten miles.

On the 26th a smart breeze sprang up, which drove us on nobly at the rate of from seven to ten knots an hour. The 28th we spoke a Portuguese brig bound from Rio Grande to Pernambuco. The captain and crew of this vessel were all negroes, the lowest of whom was six feet high. We inquired from the sable commander what was his longitude; but he could not give us any information on the subject! After setting this unfortunate navigator right we pursued our course; and the wind still continuing fresh, we were quickly emancipated from the scorching influence of a vertical sun.

On the 10th of December, in latitude 39° , we spoke the American ship *Manilla*, Captain M'Lean, on her return from a whaling voyage, and bound to Nantucket, Rhode Island. The captain came on board, and politely waited till we had written a few letters, of which he took charge. A few days after this we lost sight of the celebrated Magellanic clouds, which had been visible almost from the time we crossed the Equator. That

these nebulæ should be so immutable in their form and station, has been a source of no trifling perplexity to our natural philosophers. As so much ink has already been consumed in speculations respecting these phenomena, and such various and conflicting opinions elicited from the most learned astronomers of the last and present age, I conceive it would be presumptuous in me to offer a single word on the subject. These clouds are white, and in shape nearly resemble an equilateral triangle, rounded at each angular point.

On the 21st of December, at five A. M., land was discovered on our weather bow. The captain pronounced it to be the coast of Patagonia; and acting on this opinion, we kept along-shore, in order to pass between the Falkland Islands and the mainland; but, strange to tell! at noon, when he obtained a meridian observation, he discovered that what he previously conceived to be the Patagonian coast was in reality a part of the Falkland Islands. To account for this mistake, it is proper to mention, that during the preceding ten days the haziness of the weather precluded the possibility of our obtaining either a solar or lunar

observation; we therefore were compelled to sail entirely by dead reckoning. To this may be added, the effect of a strong westerly current: and had the obscure weather continued but a day longer, the consequences might have proved fatal.

As the wind was fair, and we had proceeded so far, the captain abandoned his original intention, and determined to sail round the eastern extremity of the islands, and from thence to shape his course for Cape Horn. We coasted along the shore until the 24th, with light westerly and south-westerly breezes. Albatrosses, penguins, and pintado birds were very numerous around the ship. We shot several, and took others with a hook and bait. One albatross which we caught in this manner received but little injury. It had an enormously large bill, measured eleven feet from wing to wing when extended, and kept a fierce English bull-dog at bay for half an hour.

Although the Falkland Islands occupy in the southern hemisphere a similar degree of latitude to that of Ireland in the northern, still they possess none of the characteristic fertility of the "Emerald Isle." Of grass, properly so called,

there is none in those islands. In vegetable and animal productions they are also deficient ; and the climate, generally speaking, is cold, variable, and stormy : yet for such a place the British empire was on the point of being involved in a war, the preparations for which cost the nation some millions !*

On the 24th we took leave of the islands with a gentle breeze right aft, but this changed ere we had cleared the Sea-lion rocks to a violent head-gale. All the lighter sails were instantly furled ; in the hurry of doing which, the gaskets or small ropes which bound the flying jib gave way, and two sailors were sent out to adjust it. While they were in the act of performing this hazardous duty a tremendous wave struck the forepart of the ship, carried away the jib-boom, and with it the two unfortunate men who were securing the sail. The ship was immediately hove to, and every piece of timber, empty barrel, or hen-coop on deck was thrown over to afford the unfor-

* It may be remembered that our ejection from these islands by Buccarelli, a Spanish officer, brought the celebrated Samuel Johnson in collision with Junius.

fortunate men a chance of escape. Unhappily all our efforts were unavailing; the poor fellows remained in sight about ten minutes, when they disappeared amidst the raging billows. When the accident occurred, two of the ship's company jumped into the jolly-boat, and with all the thoughtless good-nature of sailors, were about cutting away the lashings to go to the assistance of their ill-fated messmates, when the captain observing them, ordered them out of the boat, exclaiming, "D—n you, have you a mind to go to hell also?"

This was the most gloomy Christmas eve I ever spent. The above melancholy accident, had thrown a cloud over every countenance; and when to this was added the darkness of the cabin (the dead-lights being all in), with the loud roaring of the storm, and the Alpine waves threatening every instant to engulf us, our situation may be more easily imagined than described. Home, with all its mild and social endearments at this season of general festivity involuntarily obtruded itself on our recollections. The half-expressed wish of being once more on *terra firma*

was unconsciously communicated from one to another. But when we looked upon the weather-beaten face of our veteran captain, and observed the careless, if not contented air of his officers and crew, when we felt that they were enduring the “peltings of the pitiless storm” unmoved and without a murmur; and when we reflected on the immense expanse of ocean through which we had to plough our way, and how fruitless would be the indulgence of unmanly apprehension,—“to the wind we gave our sighs,” ascended to the deck, and tendered our feeble assistance to the captain.

The gale continued with much violence until the 29th; when, at two P. M., we made Staten Land. At four P. M. we perceived the “snow-topt” mountains of Terra del Fuego, rearing their majestic heads above the clouds, and surveying with cold indifference the conflict of the contending oceans that on all sides surround them. As we approached Cape Horn the weather moderated, and the captain ordered all the lighter masts and yards again to be rigged.

January 1st, 1812, at two P. M., on this day, we

bade adieu to the Atlantic, and sailed round the long-dreaded southern extremity of America, with a gentle breeze from the N.N.W., at the rate of one mile per hour, and under top-gallant studding-sails ; a circumstance I believe unparalleled in the history of circumnavigation.

Towards evening the wind died away, and

Not a breeze disturb'd the wide serene.

Our entrance into the great Pacific was marked by none of those terrible concussions of the “vasty deep,” the frequency of which have given such a fearful celebrity to Cape Horn. It seemed as if the two mighty oceans had ceased for a period their dreadful warfare, and mingled their waters in the blessed calm of peace. On our right rose the wild inhospitable shores of Terra del Fuego ; on the left lay the low desert islands of Diego Ramirez ; while all around myriads of whales, porpoises, and other marine monsters, emerging at intervals from the deep, and rolling their huge bodies over the placid surface of the surrounding element, agreeably diversified the scene.

This calm was of short duration. On the fol-

lowing day the wind shifted once more ahead, and drove us as far as 61° S. before we cleared Cape Noire, the south-western point of Terra del Fuego. During this period we had a succession of cold boisterous weather, and occasionally came in collision with large masses of floating ice, from which we however escaped without injury.

It is unnecessary to mention to my geographical readers that the period at which we doubled the cape is the summer season in the high southern latitudes; and if such be its attractions in the balmy season of the year, what a region must it be on the arrival of

Barren Winter, with his nipping colds!

We are informed by the early geographers that Terra del Fuego was so called from several volcanoes which contrasted their vivid flames with the surrounding icy wastes: and from the same authority we learn that Patagonia, which is on the opposite side of the Straits of Magellan, was inhabited by a race of people of immense stature. Modern travellers, however, have obtained a more correct knowledge of that country, and have re-

duced the wonderful altitude of the supposed giants to the common standard of humanity. Young travellers should not make rash assertions, particularly if opposed to the received opinions of the world. I cannot however avoid saying, that it is my belief there is no better foundation for the volcanoes than there was for the accounts of the giants. For several days that we were in sight of this supposed land of fire we did not observe the smallest appearance of smoke; and our captain, who had made many voyages round Cape Horn, declared he had never perceived the slightest volcanic appearance in its neighbourhood.

On the 12th of January the wind veered in our favour, and enabled us to proceed with brisk southerly breezes till the 19th, on which day, in lat. 52°, long. 79° W., nearly abreast of the Straits of Magellan, we encountered a most dreadful gale from the eastward, which lasted eighteen hours. Our ship was a stout strong-built vessel, notwithstanding which she sustained considerable damage. The bulwarks were completely washed away; the head carried off; the mainmast and

bowsprit sprung ; and the foresail, which was the only one set, was blown to a thousand shivers. We shipped several heavy seas in the cabin, and for some time all our trunks were floating. The violence of the storm however moderated on the 20th, and enabled us once more to bring the vessel under control : had it continued twelve hours longer, we should inevitably have been dashed to pieces on the iron-bound shores of Terra del Fuego ; for, at the period the hurricane broke, we were not twenty-five leagues from shore ; and owing to the unmanageable state of the vessel, the wind was driving us with unopposed force in that direction. The billows made sad havock among the remainder of our live-stock. The sheep, poultry, and most of our hogs, were carried away ; and a few only of the last, fortunately for us, escaped drowning, to die by the hands of the butcher.

On the 27th a young man named Henry Willets, who had been engaged as a hunter in the Company's service, died of the black scurvy, a disease which it is supposed he had contracted previous to his embarkation, as no other person

on board had any scorbutic affection. As many of my readers may not be acquainted with the melancholy ceremony of consigning the body of a fellow being to the deep, I shall mention it. The deceased was enveloped in his blankets, in which two large pieces of lead were sewed, and placed immediately under his feet. The body was then laid on a plank, one end of which rested on the railing, and the other was supported by his comrades, the crew and passengers forming a circle about it. The beautiful and sublime burial service of the Church of England was then read in an audible and impressive manner by Mr. Nicolls, who officiated as chaplain, after which the plank was raised, the body with the feet downwards slid gently into the ocean, and in a moment we lost sight of it for ever.

On the 4th of February, at two P. M., we made the island of Juan Fernandez; and at six, that of Massafuero, at the latter of which the captain determined to touch for a supply of wood and water. It was on the former island in the beginning of the eighteenth century that Alexander Selkirk, a Scotchman, resided for several years,

and from whose rude indigested story the ingenious De Foe, by adding the fictitious Friday, &c. has given to the world the delightful romance of Robinson Crusoe.

On the morning of the 5th we stood in to about five miles off shore, when the ship was hove to; and at six o'clock we proceeded for the island in the pinnace and jolly-boat, with twenty-four empty water-casks. Our party, including mates, passengers, and sailors, amounted to twenty-three. A heavy surf broke along the beach, and after searching in vain for a fair opening to disembark, we were reduced to the disagreeable necessity of throwing ourselves through the surf, and succeeded in accomplishing a landing at the imminent risk of our lives. After making a cheering fire to dry our clothes, we divided into two parties for the purpose of exploring the island. Messrs. Clarke, Clapp, and Seton, formed one; and Messrs. Nicolls, Halsey, and myself, the other; Messrs. Rhodes, Dean, and Ehninger, remained in the boats, and at the landing-place, to superintend the watering and fishing business.

The island appears to be one vast rock split by

some convulsion of nature into five or six parts. It was through one of these chasms that our party determined to proceed ; and accoutred each with a fowling-piece, horn and pouch, we set forward in quest of adventures. The breadth of the aperture at its entrance did not exceed fifty feet, and it became narrower as we advanced : through the bottom meandered a clear stream of fine water, from which the boats were supplied, and which proved of great service to us in the course of our excursion. We had not proceeded more than half a mile when we encountered so many difficulties in climbing over steep rocks, passing ponds, waterfalls, &c., that we were compelled to leave our guns behind us. Thus disembarrassed, we continued our course for upwards of two miles up a steep ascent, following the different windings of the stream, which, at intervals, tumbling over large rocks, formed cascades which greatly impeded our progress.

In proportion as we advanced the daylight seemed to recede, and for some time we were involved in an almost gloomy darkness, on account of the mountain tops on each side nearly

forming a junction. We now regretted the want of our guns, as we observed a great number of goats on the surrounding precipices; and the dead bodies of several, in a more or less decayed state, which we supposed must have fallen in bounding from cliff to cliff, and ascending the slippery and almost perpendicular hills among which they vegetate. A little farther on, on turning the point of a projecting rock, we were agreeably relieved by the bright rays of the sun, which shone with great splendour on the chaotic mass of rocks by which we were encompassed. Reanimated by the presence of this cheering object, we redoubled our pace, and were already congratulating ourselves with being near the summit of the mountain, (which from the height we had ascended must have been the case,) when our progress was arrested by a large pond, upwards of twenty feet deep; and from the steepness of the rocks on each side, it was impossible to pass it except by swimming. We therefore determined to return before night overtook us in such a dreary place; and after encountering fifty hair-breadth escapes, reached the watering place about seven o'clock,

hungry as wolves, and almost fatigued to death. Here we found the other party, who had arrived a short time before us. Messrs. Clarke and Clapp shot two fat goats; and Mr. Dean, who with three men remained in the boats, caught between three and four hundred excellent fish, out of which we succeeded in making an excellent supper.

Sixteen of the casks being now filled, Mr. Rhodes judged it expedient to proceed with them to the ship, and to return the following day for the remainder. Ten were made fast to the pinnace, and six to the jolly boat, and at one o'clock, A. M., on the morning of the 6th, after some hours' hard rowing, we reached the ship amidst a storm of thunder, lightning, and rain. During that day it blew too fresh to permit the boats to return, and we kept standing off and on till the 7th, when the breeze moderated, and enabled us to bring off the remaining casks.

Massafuero rises abruptly from the sea, and has but a narrow stripe of beach. It was formerly well stocked with seals, but these animals have been nearly destroyed by American whalers. The goats are numerous, but too rancid to be used for

food, except in cases of necessity. The island also appears to be devoid of wood. The carpenter who went on shore for the purpose of procuring some that could be used in building a boat, found only a few pieces with a close grain, very hard, and in colour resembling box: it was fit only for knees. Mr. Clapp's party in their tour, which was along the beach, round the western extremity of the island, saw none of this necessary article; and in the cleft of the mountain through which our party proceeded we observed only a few trees of the kind found by the carpenter, growing among inaccessible rocks. The most valuable production of Massafuero is undoubtedly its fish, of which there is a great variety. No one on board was able to appropriate names to all we took. The smallest is a species of whiting, and very delicate when fried. The largest bears a strong resemblance to cod, and by some of our people was deemed superior. There are also several kinds of bass, herrings, crabs, &c. We caught a few conger eels; the most disgusting I ever saw: but, as a counterbalance, the Massafuero lobster, for largeness of size, beautiful variety of colours,

and deliciousness of taste, is, I believe, unrivalled.

With the exception of the fish, there is nothing to induce a vessel to touch at this place, while the fruitful island of Juan Fernandez is so near, but a desire, as was our case, of concealing the object of its voyage from the inquisitive and jealous eyes of the Spanish authorities, who were stationed at the latter island.*

A few days after leaving Massafuero we got into the trade winds, which wafted us on at an even steady rate, varying from four to seven knots an hour. A curious incident occurred on Sunday the 23rd of February, early on the morning of which day a hog had been killed; a practice which had been generally observed every sabbath morning during the voyage.

After breakfast, the weather being calm, a num-

* While Spain held possession of South America every vessel touching at Juan Fernandez was subjected to a rigorous search; and from the number of our guns, joined to the great quantities of warlike stores on board, the captain did not deem it prudent to run the risk of an inquisitorial inspection. I should hope the officers of the Chilian republic stationed here have adopted a more liberal policy.

ber of the crew and passengers amused themselves by bathing around the vessel. Some of them had returned on board, when a sailor on the forecastle discovered a large shark gliding slowly and cautiously under the starboard bow. With great presence of mind, he instantly seized a small rope called a clew-line, and with characteristic dispatch made a running knot, which he silently lowered into the water : the monster unwarily passed the head and upper fin through the noose ; on observing which, the sailor jerked the rope round the cat-head, and, with the assistance of some of his messmates, succeeded in hauling it on deck. In the mean time, those who were still sporting in the water were almost paralysed on hearing the cry of “ a shark ! a shark ! ” and not knowing on which side of them lay the dreaded danger, some made for the ship, and others swam from it ; each momentarily expecting to come in contact with

His jaws horrific, arm'd with threefold fate,

when their fears were dissipated by announcing to them the welcome intelligence of his caption. On

dissecting him, the entire entrails of the hog which had been killed in the morning were found in his belly ! so that he must have been alongside during the whole of the forenoon, and was doubtless intimidated by the number of the swimmers from attacking any of them individually.

On the 4th of March we crossed the Equator, for the second time this voyage, with a brisk south-easterly breeze ; and on the 25th, at day-break, we made the island of Owhyee, the largest in the group of the Sandwich Islands. It was the captain's original intention to stop at this place for his supplies ; but on approaching Karakakooa bay we were informed by some natives, who came off in canoes, that Tamaahmaah, the king, then resided in Whoahoo. As we were anxious, for several reasons, to have an interview with his majesty, the captain relinquished the idea of stopping here, and stood about for the latter island.

As we sailed along Owhyee, with a fine easterly breeze, nature and art displayed to our view one of the finest prospects I ever beheld. The snow-clad summit of the gigantic Mouna Roah, towering into the clouds, with its rocky and dreary

sides, presented a sublime *coup d'œil*, and formed a powerful contrast to its cultivated base, and the beautiful plantations interspersed along the shore. Eternal winter reigned above, while all beneath flourished in the luxuriance of perpetual summer. The death, too, of the ill-fated and memorable Cook will attach a melancholy celebrity to this island; as it was here that that great navigator was sacrificed in a temporary ebullition of savage fury, and closed a brilliant career of services, which reflect honour on his country, and will perpetuate his name to the latest posterity.

As the wind continued fresh, we soon cleared Owhyee, and passed in succession the islands of Mowee, Ranai, Morotoi, and in the evening came in sight of Whoahoo. While we sailed along this interesting group of islands several Indians boarded us, from whom we purchased a few hogs, some melons, plantains, &c. It being too late to attempt anchoring this evening, we stood off and on during the night.

CHAPTER II.

Whoahoo—Visit from a chief—Nocturnal excursion—King and queens—Invasion of the ship—White men—Gardens—Foot race, and summary justice—Throwing the spear—Royal residence, and body guard—Mourning for a chief's wife—Billy Pitt, George Washington, &c.

ON Thursday the 26th of March, at noon, we came to anchor outside of the bar in Whytetee bay, about two miles from shore, and nearly abreast of a village from which the bay is named.

A short time after anchoring we were visited by an cree or chief, named Tiama, in a double canoe, who was sent by the king to learn from whence the ship came, whither bound, &c. After obtaining the necessary information, and taking a glass of wine, he returned, and was accompanied by the captain, who went on shore in order to acquaint his majesty with the particular object he had in touching here. Tiama informed us that a *taboo** was then in force, which accounted

* See Cook, Vancouver, &c.

for our not being visited by any of the natives. At ten o'clock the captain came back with Tiama. He had met with a favourable reception from Ta-maahmaah, who promised to expedite his departure as soon as possible.

Mr. Nicolls observing the chief preparing to return, and being impatient to go on shore, proposed that the passengers should accompany him: this was opposed by others; upon which it was put to the vote, when four appearing in its favour, the motion was of course carried. The ayes were Messrs. Nicolls, Clapp, Halsey, and myself: the minority chose to remain on board. The weather was calm, and we took with us a couple of flutes. Our canoe went on briskly until we passed the channel of the bar, when a most delightful nocturnal prospect opened on us. The serenity of the sky and the brightness of the moon enabled us to discern objects distinctly on shore. The village of Whyttee, situated in an open grove of cocoa-nut trees, with the hills rising gently in the rear, presented a charming perspective by moonlight, while the solemn stillness of the night, interrupted at intervals by the hoarse

murmurs of the surges, as they broke over the bar, rendered the scene in the highest degree romantic. On landing we found the beach covered with a concourse of natives, whom the sound of our flutes had attracted thither: they came pressing on us in such crowds, that were it not for the chief's authority, we should have had considerable difficulty in forcing a passage through them. About midnight we reached the village, and Tiama conducted us to his house, where we experienced a hospitable reception from his family, which consisted of three strapping wives, two handsome daughters, and a brother, about twenty years of age. A young pig lost its life by our arrival, on which, with some cocoa-nuts and bananas, we made an excellent supper. Tiama's brother was our *major domo*: he attached himself particularly to Nicolls, who called him Tom; and as a compensation for his trouble and obliging attention to us, made him a present of his stockings, which, unfortunately for poor Tom, were silk ones. He was so proud of the gift, that he immediately put them over his olive-coloured calves, and without any shoes, he continued

walking and working about the house: this was usage to which silk stockings were not accustomed, and the consequence was that before morning their soles had vanished. Our repast being finished, the chief ordered a bevy of young females, who since our arrival had been hovering about the house, to entertain us with one of their native airs: they at once complied, and having formed themselves into a semicircle, sang in rather an harmonious manner: their languishing eyes, and significant pauses, evidently showed without the aid of an interpreter that the subject was amatory. This over, Tom conducted us to a neat lodge which Tiama had allotted for our use, and in which we enjoyed the remainder of the night in undisturbed repose on soft beds of island cloth.

On the following morning we arose early, and took a refreshing walk on the sea-shore, after which we returned to the ship in Tiama's canoe. Our appearance was a subject of merriment to those on board. One bare-legged, another without his cravat, the coat of a third closely buttoned up to conceal the absence of his vest; all

in fact lighter than when we set out ; but nothing was purloined. We had been hospitably entertained by the chieftain and his family ; gratitude demanded a return, and as we had omitted to furnish ourselves with trinkets, we could only supply the deficiency by parting with a portion of our least useful clothing.

As the taboo had ceased to operate this day, we found the vessel crowded with natives bartering their produce with our people. At noon we were honoured by a visit from their majesties, the king, and four queens, attended by Krimacoo, the prime minister, and several of the principal chiefs, together with Messrs. Maninna and Hairbottle, two white men ; the former a Spaniard, who held the office of chief interpreter to the king, and the latter an Englishman, and head pilot of his majesty's fleet.

The king and queens came in a large double canoc, which was formed by lashing two canoes together, separated by bars of two and a half feet in length from each other. Each canoe had fourteen chosen men. On the bars was raised a kind of seat on which the queens reposed, and above

all was placed an arm-chest well stored with muskets, on which the king

Above the rest,

In shape and gesture proudly eminent

Sat like—a tailor.

Immediately before his majesty was a native who carried a handsome silver-hilted hanger, which was presented to him by the late emperor of Russia, and which on state occasions he had always carried before him, in imitation as we supposed of European sword-bearers. Behind the royal personage sat another native who carried a large and highly polished bowl of dark-brown wood, into which his majesty ever and anon ejected all his superabundant saliva.

After he had arrived on the deck, Tamaah-maah shook hands in the most condescending manner with every one he met between the cabin and the gang-way, exclaiming to each person, “Aroah, Aroah nuee” (I love you, I love you much). There was a degree of negligent simplicity about his dress, which strongly characterised the royal philosopher. His head was crowned with an old woollen hat; the coat was formed of

coarse blue cloth in the antique shape, with large metal buttons; the waistcoat, of brown velvet, which in its youthful days had been black: a pair of short, tight, and well-worn velveteen pantaloons displayed to great advantage coarse worsted stockings and thick-soled shoes, all admirably adapted for the tropics; while his shirt and cravat, which had formerly been white, seemed to have had a serious misunderstanding with their washerwoman. Such, gentle reader, was the costume of Tamaahmaah the First, king of the Sandwich Islands, hereditary prince of Owhyee, and protector of a confederation of escaped convicts from New South Wales!*

The royal party remained on board to dine. The king only sat at table, and was placed at the right hand of the captain, with the attendant who carried his saliva reservoir behind him. He ate voraciously, and in a very commendable manner washed down the solids with a fair quantum

* Tamaahmaah was hereditary king of Owhyee only; he subsequently conquered all the other islands. A number of convicts are at Whoahoo, who escaped from Botany Bay by means of American vessels, and who reside here in security.

of Madeira, to the virtues of which he appeared by no means to be a stranger. On filling the first glass he drank our healths individually ; after which he plied away nobly, and apparently unconscious of the presence of any of the company. He did not touch the port, but finished between two and three decanters of the Madeira. As the ladies are prohibited from eating with the men, we were of course deprived of the pleasure of their society at our repast ; but after we had quitted the table they were graciously permitted to occupy our seats. Their dinner had been dressed on shore by their own cooks, and was brought by them on board ; it consisted of small raw fish, roasted dogs, and a white mixture called *pooah*, of the consistence of flummery : this last they take by dipping the two forefingers of the right hand into the dish which contains the *pooah*, and after turning them round in the mixture until they are covered with three or four coats, they raise the hand, and giving the fingers a dexterous twist, to shake off the fag-ends, bring them forward rapidly to the mouth, which is ready open for their reception, and by a strong

labial compression, they are quickly cleared of their precious burden ! But in plain, unadorned simplicity of dress, they far exceeded their royal consort. It merely consisted of a long piece of their country cloth wrapped in several folds round the waist, and reaching only to the knees, leaving the breasts and legs exposed to the criticisms of amateurs in female beauty ; to this they occasionally add a scarf of the same material, which is negligently thrown over the shoulders, and falls behind. They are very corpulent : the favourite measured nearly nine feet in circumference round the waist ; and the others were not much inferior in size. We may say of the royal taste, that

They were chosen as we choose old plate,
Not for their beauty, but their weight.

Still they possess mild engaging countenances, with that "soft sleepiness of the eye" by which Goldsmith distinguishes the beauties of Cashmere. Their conduct is under strict surveillance. Mr. Hairbottle informed us, that a few days previous to our arrival an intrigue had been

discovered between the favourite queen and one of the king's body guard. As their guilt admitted of no doubt, the unfortunate paramour was strangled on the same night; but as Tã-maahmaah still cherished a lingering affection for his frail favourite, he pardoned her, with the short, but pithy expression, "If you do it again——."

During the afternoon the king employed himself in taking the dimensions of the ship, examining the cabin, state-rooms, &c. Scarcely an object escaped the royal scrutiny: observing Mr. Seton writing, he approached him, and began to examine the various little nic-nacs with which the desk was furnished. Seton showed him a handsome penknife of curious workmanship, containing a number of blades, *not* with an intention of bestowing it: with this he appeared particularly pleased, and putting it into one of the pockets of his capacious vest, said, "Mytye, nue nue mytye," (good, very good,) and walked away. It was in vain for Seton to expostulate; his majesty did not understand English, and all entreaties to induce him to return the penknife

were ineffectual. On the following day, however, a chief brought Seton a handsome present from the king, of mats, cloth, and other native productions, with two hundred fine cocoa-nuts.

In the course of the evening the queens played draughts with some of our most scientific amateurs, whom they beat hollow; and such was the skill evinced by them in the game, that not one of our best players succeeded in making a king.

Late in the evening our illustrious guests took their departure, accompanied by all their attendants; but they had scarcely embarked in their canoes when the ship was boarded on all sides by numbers of women, who had come off in small canoes paddled by men or elderly females, and who, after leaving their precious cargo on deck, returned quickly to the island, lest the captain should refuse his sanction to their remaining in the vessel. They crowded in such numbers about the crew as to obstruct the performance of their duty, and the captain threatened to send them all on shore in the ship's

boats if they did not behave themselves with more propriety. This had the desired effect, and while they remained on board they gave no farther cause for complaint.

On the following morning, the 28th, we weighed anchor, and worked the ship a few miles higher up, exactly opposite the village of Honaroora, where the king resided. We spent the day on shore, at the house of a Mr. Holmes, a white man, and a native of the United States, by whom we were sumptuously entertained. He had been settled here since the year 1793, and at the period I speak of was, next to the king, the greatest chief on the island. He had one hundred and eighty servants, or under-tenants, whom he called slaves, and who occupied small huts in the immediate vicinity of his house. He had also extensive plantations on Whoahoo, and on the island of Morotoi, from whence he derived a considerable income. He was married to a native wife, by whom he had several children. The eldest was a most interesting girl, aged about fifteen years, with a peculiarly soft and expressive countenance. Nature, in her freaks, had bestowed upon this

island beauty an extraordinary profusion of hair, in which the raven tresses of the mother were strangely intermingled with the flaxen locks of the father. She spoke tolerably good English, and always sat near him. He appeared to watch her conduct with all the parental solicitude of a man who, from long experience, well knew the danger to which she was exposed from the general demoralisation of manners that prevailed about her. Mr. Holmes is greatly respected by the natives, by whom he is entitled *Erce Homo*, or the Chief Holmes.

As we met here several other respectable white men, I shall mention their names ; and, first, Mr. Maninna. This gentleman had been a Spanish officer, and in consequence of having while stationed at Mexico killed a superior officer in a quarrel, he fled to Californio, from whence he escaped to the Sandwich islands, where, having acquired the language with wonderful facility, he was appointed to the office of chief interpreter. He was a man of general information, spoke French and English fluently, and from his easy manners, and insinuating address, shortly became

a general favourite. He had built a handsome stone house, the only one on the island, in which he resided with his wife, who was the daughter of a chief: her sister lived also in the same house; and the busy tongue of scandal, which even here has found an entrance, did not hesitate to say that the two sisters equally participated in his affections. His drawing-room was decorated with a number of Chinese paintings, which he obtained from Canton, of the crucifixion, the Madonna, different saints, &c.; but on removing a sliding pannel from the opposite side, subjects of a far different nature were represented!

Mr. Davis, the king's gardener, was a Welshman, and at this period had been settled on the island twelve years. He had also considerable plantations, and had a native wife, who was a most incontinent jade. He had just returned from a distant part of the island, whither he had been in pursuit of his faithless *cara sposa*, who had eloped a few days before with one of her native beaux. Poor Davis felt rather sore on being bantered by old Holmes on this affair. "Tam the strap," said he, "I cot her snug enough

to be sure with her sweetheart ; but I think she'll rememper the pasting I gave her all the tays of her life." We were informed he might have easily parted from her, and procured a more suitable match, but he was unfortunately too much attached to her to think of taking another.

Mr. Hairbottle, the chief pilot, is a native of Berwick, and was formerly boatswain of an English merchant ship. He had resided upwards of fourteen years on the different islands, and had been married to a native wife, who was dead for some years. He was a quiet, unassuming old man, whose principal enjoyments consisted in a glass of rum grog and a pipe of tobacco.

Mr. Wadsworth, an American. This gentleman had been chief mate of a ship which had touched here about six years before. Having quarrelled with his captain, they separated, and he took up his residence in the island. The king, who gave particular encouragement to white men of education to settle here, immediately presented Wadsworth with a *belle brunette* for a wife, together with a house and some hogs.

Here we also found a gentleman from New

York, under the assumed name of Cook; but who was recognised by Mr. Nicolls as a member of a highly respectable family in that city, named S——s. He had, like Wadsworth, been also chief officer of an American East Indiaman, which had touched here about three months previous to our arrival; and in consequence of a misunderstanding with the captain, he left the ship, and took up his abode with Mr. Holmes. On hearing of this circumstance, Tamaahmaah, as an encouragement to his settling permanently on the island, gave him the daughter of a principal chief for a wife, some land, and a number of hogs. —S——s, however, did not appear to relish his situation: he had been too long accustomed to the refinements of civilisation, at once to adapt himself to Indian habits, and received with apathy the fond caresses of his olive-coloured spouse. He expressed a desire to return in our ship, but the captain's arrangements could not permit it.

While on this subject I may as well mention that the example of Wadsworth and S——s seemed to be contagious; for a few days after our arrival Mr. Dean, our third officer, had a

serious altercation with the captain, which ended in his quitting the ship; and on its coming to the king's knowledge, he sent for him, and told him if he would remain, and take charge of his fleet, he would give him a house and lands, plenty of hogs, and a beautiful daughter of a chief for a wife. Dean told him he had not yet made up his mind on the subject, and requested time to consider the offer. The king did not object, and the interview ended. I believe however that Dean subsequently quitted the island, and returned to New York.

Mr. Holmes gave us a plentiful dinner of roast pork, roast dog, fowl, ham, fish, wine, and rum, with a profusion of excellent tropical fruit. A number of native servants attended at table, each holding a napkin: they performed their duty in a very expert manner, and appeared to be well acquainted with all the domestic economy of the table. Their livery was quite uniform, and consisted merely of a cincture of country cloth round the waist, from which a narrow piece of the same stuff passed between the legs, and was fastened to the belt, leaving the remainder of the body totally un-

covered ! Our noble commander was vice-president, and undertook to carve the dog ; which duty he performed in a manner quite unique. He was the only one of our party who partook of it. The idea of eating so faithful an animal without even the plea of necessity effectually prevented any of us joining in this part of the feast ; although, to do the meat justice, it really *looked* very well when roasted. The islanders esteem it the greatest luxury they possess ; and no one under the dignity of an eree of the first class is permitted to partake of this delicious food. However singular their taste may be regarded in this respect by modern civilisation, my classical readers may recollect that the ancients reckoned dogs excellent eating, particularly when young and fat ; and we have the authority of Hippocrates for saying that their flesh is equal to pork or mutton : he also adds, that the flesh of a grown dog is both wholesome and strengthening, and that of puppies relaxing. The Romans, too, highly admired these animals as an article of food, and thought them a supper in which the gods themselves would have delighted !

Independently of the white men whose names I have mentioned, there were about fourteen others, belonging to all nations, the majority of whom were convicts who had effected their escape from Botany Bay, and were held in no estimation by the natives. They are supremely indolent, and rum and women seemed to constitute their only enjoyment.

On the 29th we made an excursion into the interior with Davis. His gardens were extensive, and pleasantly situated at the foot of the hills, between four and five miles from Honaroora. They were laid out with taste, and kept in excellent order. Exclusive of the indigenous productions of the country, with which they were plentifully stocked, he planted a few years before some *Irish* potatoes, and the crop more than equalled his expectations. We also observed some prime plantations of sugar cane. A few of those we measured had fourteen feet eatable, and were one foot in circumference, which, I am informed, far exceeds the best Jamaica canes. The climate of the Sandwich islands is, however, more propitious to the growth of the cane than that of the West

Indies, at which latter place it has, besides, many enemies to encounter which are strangers to the islands in the Pacific; such as monkies, ants, bugs, the blast, &c., one or other of which often destroys the fairest hopes of the planter. The islanders distil an inferior spirit from it, which the resident white people have dignified by the title of "*country rum*." It is weak, and has a smoky, insipid taste, and does not produce intoxication except taken in large quantities.

On our way back we visited the king's gardens, which were contiguous to Davis's. They were much more extensive than his, although far inferior in neatness, and contained nothing particularly deserving notice. Davis was the only white man who superintended his own plantations: the others were left to the management of their servants, and were seldom visited by the proprietors; and as he was a good practical agriculturist, his gardens were superior to any we saw on the island. In the course of this tour we did not observe a spot that could be turned to advantage left unimproved. The country all around the bay exhibits the highest state of cul-

tivation, and presents at one view a continued range of picturesque plantations, intersected by small canals, and varied by groves of cocoa-nut trees ; the whole bounded on the back ground by gently sloping hills, and in the front by the ocean. We returned late in the evening, highly delighted with our day's excursion, and sat down to an excellent dinner prepared for us by the worthy Cambrian, in whose hospitable mansion we spent the night.

On the 30th we were present at a grand pedestrian racing match, between Krikapooree, the king's nephew, and an American black named Anderson, who was his armourer : the latter won, after a well contested struggle. The race-course presented a novel and striking appearance. At the upper end was erected a covered platform about twenty feet from the ground, on which the king sat cross-legged, and without any covering whatever, save the waistband commonly worn by the natives : his guards armed with muskets paraded around the platform ; while on each side, and close to the guards, were assembled an immense concourse of natives of all classes, mingled

together without any regard to rank, age, or sex. The two favourite queens were richly dressed : one wore a light-blue satin gown, trimmed with broad gold lace ; the other had on a cream-coloured riding-habit of cassimere, ornamented with silver lace, and a profusion of sugar-loaf buttons, &c. These dresses were made for them in England, fitted them admirably, and set off their persons to great advantage. They walked through the crowd along with several chiefs' wives, and seemed in a high degree to enjoy the bustling scene before them. Betting was very spirited on the issue of the race. Money of course was out of the question ; but among the lower classes its place was supplied by axes, beads, knives, scissors, handkerchiefs, and various kinds of trinkets ; and among the erees of the first and second grades we could distinguish scarlet and blue cloths, silks, Chinese shawls, calicoes, ribbons, &c. Several quarrels occurred among the men, which were settled *à l'Anglaise* by the fist. One of the natives had a dispute about a bet with an English sailor who had been left here a short time before by his captain for mutiny. The Indian

felt he was right, and refused to yield to the chicanery of the sailor, who, in order to intimidate him, drew from his pocket a small pistol, which he cocked, and presented in a menacing manner at the islander's breast, swearing if he did not submit he would shoot him: this however was disregarded by the other, who seemed determined not to flinch; but the king, who had observed the whole transaction from his elevated position, ordered the sailor to be brought up to him, which was instantly complied with. He then took the pistol, and delivered it to one of his attendants to be placed in the royal armoury; and addressing the sailor, told him the only punishment he should then inflict on him would be the forfeiture of the pistol; but in case he ever offended in the same manner again, he would have him put to death. We were quite delighted with this summary administration of justice, for the sailor appeared to be a quarrelsome rascal, and bore an infamous character among his associates.

After the race was over several wrestling and boxing matches took place, on which there was also considerable betting. Some of our party

who were amateur pugilists declared their style of hitting to be admirable ; but as I unfortunately never studied the noble science of self-defence, I am quite incompetent to hazard an opinion on the subject. I will however say, that no unfair play was used, and that no blow was struck while a man was down. At the termination of these encounters a large space was formed, for two natives to display their skill in throwing the spear. A full account of this wonderful performance is given in Cook's voyages ; and I can only add, that the amazing activity evinced in avoiding each other's weapons, by leaping to the right or left, or allowing them to pass under their arms, between their legs, &c. ; and their surprising dexterity and self-possession in a situation in which an European would be transfixed ere he had time to look about him, must be seen to be credited. This exercise forms the amusement of their earliest years, and is the *ne plus ultra* of their education. No islander can take a wife until he is able to withstand the attacks of any old warrior whom the chief of his tribe may appoint to try him ; so that this condemnation to celibacy, among a peo-

ple so notoriously amorous, contributes, I should imagine, more than any other cause, to the wonderful perfection at which they have arrived in this exercise.

In front of the royal residence there are planted thirty pieces of cannon ; fifteen on each side ; chiefly six and nine pounders. A body guard of handsome athletic young men are stationed close to the house ; two of whom are placed as sentinels at the door, and are relieved with as much regularity as at any garrison in England. In the day-time their muskets generally remain piled before the door, but are taken in at night. These *gardes-du-corps* have no particular dress to distinguish them from civilians ; and after the amusements just mentioned had ended the king ordered them to go through the manual and platoon exercises ; which, considering the limited means they have had for learning, they performed with tolerable precision.

Shortly after quitting this noisy and bustling scene of mirth and festivity we were attracted by the sounds of mourning voices to a large house in a retired corner of the village ; in front of which

sat eight women, in a circle, all in a state of intoxication. At times their voices died away to a low mournful tone; when, suddenly changing, they vented the wildest and most frantic cries, tearing their hair, beating their breasts, and gnawing the ends of their fingers: in the intervals they moistened their parched throats from a bottle which was passed round from one to the other; and after all had partaken of the libation they renewed their cries with redoubled vigour. Their hanging breasts, dishevelled hair, and fiery eyes, presented more the appearance of furies than of human beings; and we were at first afraid to approach them, apprehensive of an attack in the height of one of their paroxysms. We were told however there was no danger, and they would injure no one save themselves. On inquiry, we ascertained that the dead body of a chief's wife of the second class lay in an adjoining house, and that these women were her friends and relatives mourning her death. This ceremony, although possessing a degree of rude lachrymose comicality, had nothing peculiarly interesting, and we quickly left the scene.

Several of the chiefs have punctured on their arms the names of celebrated English and American statesmen, captains of ships, &c. At the race-course I observed Billy Pitt, George Washington, and Billy Cobbett, walking together in the most familiar manner, and apparently engaged in confidential conversation; while, in the centre of another group, Charley Fox, Thomas Jefferson, James Maddison, Bonaparte, and Tom Paine, were to be seen on equally friendly terms with each other. They seem to be proud of these names, and generally prefer them to their own. Krimacoo, the prime minister, is called Billy Pitt, from the great influence he possesses. He is consulted by the king on all subjects of importance; and in cases of particular emergency Mr. Holmes is sent for to give his advice.

CHAPTER III.

Tamaahmaah—The Eooranee—Curious custom—Fickleness in dress—Character of natives—Important position of the islands—Cow hunting—Complete our supplies—Take a number of natives—Departure—New discovery—Arrival at the Columbia.

FROM this period until our departure we were honoured with several visits from the royal family, principally connected with the business of procuring our supplies. The king was a hard bargain maker, and although he had several pipes of Madeira in his stores, he would not barter a single article until he obtained a quarter-cask of that wine, of which he was passionately fond. He was by no means as generous as many of his subjects, and he seldom committed an act of liberality without having a particular object in

view. He had upwards of forty small schooners built by the natives, which were quite useless to him from their ignorance of navigation ; and when he made the presents which I have already mentioned to the officers who had quarrelled with their captains, he had in view their settling on the island, and availing himself of their services in teaching the natives to navigate these vessels. The *taboos* of Tamaahmaah were often influenced by his dreams ; one of which gave rise, while we remained here, to an extraordinary proclamation, which ordered, that during the space of one day “ no native should leave the island ; and that no dogs should bark, hogs grunt, or cocks crow ! ” This whimsical prohibition was strictly complied with by the islanders ; but I need scarcely state, that the three last-mentioned classes of his majesty’s subjects did not yield it the same ready obedience. This was called a *dreaming taboo*, to distinguish it from the established ones, which occur at stated periods, and are regulated by the high priest.

At this time Tamaahmaah had only three children living, two sons and one daughter. They

were rather homely in their appearance, and afforded a bad specimen of royal beauty. The eldest son was about twenty years of age, and was called the *Eoranee*. He possessed considerable authority, and was more feared than his father, though not so much beloved. The following anecdote will show the dread in which he was held by the natives. Some of the men engaged in the Company's employment had received permission to spend a day on shore: as they did not return that night, I accompanied Mr. Clarke the following morning in search of them; and after wandering about for some time, we discovered the party descending a hill near the village, each with a lass under his arm, their hats decorated with flowers, ribbons, and handkerchiefs, and a fifer and fiddler at their head, playing away merrily. They were all nearly "half-seas over," and were on their way to the ship when they perceived us. They insisted in an humble good-natured manner on our taking the lead; and as we were anxious to get them on board, we accordingly joined them, and marched on at their head. We had not proceeded far when

the Eooranee met us, and he appeared so much pleased with the procession, that he fell into the ranks. As we approached the wharf several of the natives, who had been drawn by the sound of the music to the party, retired on seeing the young prince ; but one unfortunate rascal, who was quite drunk, annoyed us as we passed him, by pushing us and pulling our clothes ; and as the king's son was dressed like an European, he treated him in the same manner ; but I never saw consternation so strongly depicted as when the poor wretch looked up, and beheld the frowning countenance of the dreaded Eooranee : the effect was instantaneous ; he fell prostrate, as if thunderstruck, and remained perfectly motionless until we lost sight of him. We however did not part with the prince until he had promised that no punishment should be inflicted on the offending islander.

The male branches of the royal family are held in peculiar veneration, more particularly their heads. No individual, with the exception of the domestics specially appointed for that purpose, is permitted to touch that part of their sacred per-

son, or any covering that has ever been on it, upon pain of death. My ignorance of this law was near embroiling me in a serious scrape. A few days after our arrival, while strolling on the outskirts of the village, I observed an individual walking before me dressed in a handsome green frock-coat, well-made pantaloons, and Hessian boots, followed by a native carrying the tail of a white cow, which he used in driving away the flies that annoyed his master. As I was given to understand that I had been introduced to all the white men of respectability on the island, I felt anxious to ascertain who this important personage was, and therefore took a circuitous turn in order to have a front view of him. It was the Eooranee. He called me to him, and we sat down under the shade of some plantain trees. He then began to examine my clothes very minutely, and took off my hat, which was a handsome one of Portuguese willow. While this examination was going on, I felt a desire to look at his, which was of a peculiarly fine texture, and therefore uncovered the head of his highness with as little ceremony as he had observed^d towards me; but I had scarcely

touched the forbidden covering when I received a warm *soufflet* on the right cheek from the attendant. Not knowing the cause of this aggression, I determined on instant retaliation, and seizing a stone, was in the act of hurling it at the fellow's head, when my arm was arrested by the Eooranee, who begged of me, in broken English, to desist, and at the same time turned to his domestic, whom he reprimanded with marks of evident displeasure, after which he ordered him to retire.

While this was going on I observed Anderson the armourer pass, to whom I related the circumstance. The king's son then spoke to him for some time, after which Anderson told me that if any islander had committed such an offence, instant death would have followed ; and added, that the prince begged him to assure me that he deeply regretted the conduct of his domestic, who should have distinguished between a stranger and a native, and that he had dismissed him with disgrace. When Anderson had finished, the Eooranee grasped my hand in the most friendly manner ; and as I felt satisfied with the explanation

he had given, I returned its pressure with equal warmth. At this period the resident white people looked to his succession with considerable apprehension, as he was supposed to entertain views hostile to their interests. They might have been led to form this conclusion from his distant habits, and capricious tyranny towards his immediate followers; but I am happy to state their fears were groundless; for on his accession to the supreme power at his father's death, he treated them with marked indulgence, and held out the greatest encouragement to white people to settle on the island. The day after the circumstance above detailed I met him near the king's house in a state of nudity, conversing with some of the guards, and the same evening I again saw him in the loose light dress of a West India planter. His father and himself were very fickle in their clothing. I saw the old man one day in the full dress of an English general, which had been sent to him by his late majesty George III.; but he felt so awkward in the cocked-hat, boots, &c. that he quickly got rid of them, and a few hours afterwards we saw him lounging about the village,

sans hat, sans coat, sans shirt, sans culottes, sans every thing! On the death of the old king the Eooranee succeeded by the title of Tamaahmaah the Second.* At the period of our visit they knew nothing of the Christian religion; and the white professors of it who were resident among them were badly calculated to inculcate its divine precepts. Since then, however, thanks to the indefatigable and praiseworthy exertions of the missionaries, this rude, but noble-hearted race of people, have been rescued from their diabolical superstitions, and the greater part of them now enjoy the blessings of Christianity.

Cook, Vancouver, Perouse, and others, have already written so ably on the manners, customs, amusements, laws, religion, and natural productions of these islands, that I might very probably subject myself to the charge of plagiarism, or book-making, if I touched on them. To those therefore who feel anxious for farther information on these subjects I would recommend the above au-

* This unfortunate prince is the same who, with his young queen, lately fell victims to misjudged British hospitality, joined to a climate to which they were unaccustomed.

thorities, in which they will have their curiosity amply gratified.

The vice of thieving attributed to the male inhabitants is rather exaggerated. It is certainly true that numbers of those who visit trading ships are not scrupulous in appropriating to their own use every trifling article on which they can conveniently lay their hands ; but it should be observed they do not consider such abstractions in the same light as if they robbed each other. This circumstance I think it necessary to mention without attempting to justify it ; for were we to consider all their petty thefts in the same point of view that we are accustomed to regard such offences in civilised countries, we should form a very poor opinion of their honesty.

The women, too, have been generally accused of lasciviousness ; but from what I saw, joined to the information I obtained, I am induced to think the charge too general. It must, indeed, be admitted that the deportment of those who are in the habit of frequenting trading ships is not calculated to impress a stranger with a high idea of their virtue : but why make the censure general ? If a native

of Owhyee were to form his opinion of the morality of our countrywomen from the disgusting conduct of the unfortunate females who crowd our sea-ports and ships, I should imagine he would entertain a very poor estimate of English chastity. In the interior of the islands, and at a distance from sea-ports, I am informed that in the relative situations of wife and mother, their conduct is irreproachable. It is true that in the places at which ships are accustomed to touch a universal depravity seems to pervade all classes; for it is no uncommon sight to see parents bring their daughters; brothers their sisters; and husbands their wives, to earn the wages of prostitution. These vices cannot, I fear, be totally eradicated; but it is pleasing to learn, that through the active agency of the missionaries, their frightful predominancy has been greatly diminished. In other respects, the natives are brave, active, hospitable, true to their word, confiding, cleanly in their domestic economy, easily satisfied at their meals, obedient to proper authority, excellent agriculturists, quick in learning, with an aptitude for improvement that is really astonishing; and

on the whole I would say, that their character presents a fairer field for success to the exertions of the moral cultivator than that of any untutored people whom I ever met.

Recent events seem destined to place the Sandwich Islands in a much more important situation on the political map of the world than they occupied fifteen or twenty years ago. While Spain had possession of Mexico, California, and the southern continent, they were seldom visited but by fur traders, for the purpose of refitting, or obtaining fresh provisions; and were regarded by the world more as objects of curiosity than as places from which any political advantages were likely to be derived. But now that the Mexicans and southern Americans have succeeded in emancipating themselves from the slothful despotism of their ancient rulers, the native energies of their character will shortly begin to develop themselves; and uncontrolled by the trammels which so long fettered their commercial prosperity, a few years may see their fleets, in imitation of their bold and enterprising brethren of the northern continent, ploughing their way through

the Pacific, and, in exchange for their precious metals, bringing back to their country the luxurious productions of China and the Indies. The Sandwich Islands are nearly equidistant from the western coast of Mexico and the eastern boundaries of China, and consequently lie nearly in the track of vessels passing between the two continents. But the circumstance of all others calculated to raise them to the highest degree of importance, is the stupendous enterprise lately set on foot of forming a junction between the Pacific and Atlantic by cutting a canal through the Isthmus of Darien. If this magnificent undertaking succeed, the long and dangerous voyages round Cape Horn and the Cape of Good Hope will be avoided, and comparatively short and safe passages made to the western coast of America, Japan, China, our East Indian possessions, &c.

In the course of these voyages, particularly to the East, the Sandwich Islands must be touched at for fresh supplies, or, at least, closely passed. In either case, they will become an important acquisition to a maritime power. With the assistance of science they can be rendered impreg-

nable; and when we take into consideration their great natural capabilities of defence, their noble harbours, productive soil, and temperate climate, joined to the inoffensive deportment of the inhabitants, we may safely conclude that their present state of independence will not be of long duration. It is probable they will ultimately become tributary to Great Britain, Russia, or America; and in the event of war between any of these nations the power in possession of the islands, from their commanding position, will be able during the continuation of hostilities not only to controul the commerce of the Pacific, but also neutralise in a great degree the advantages likely to be derived from the Grand Junction Canal.

Several of our domestic quadrupeds are now reared on the islands; such as cows, sheep, goats, and horses. The last are brought from California, and are a small hardy race. The cows at Woahoo are the descendants of those left there by our navigators, and are perfectly wild. We purchased two of them from the king; and he ordered upwards of one hundred men of his body guard, with several chiefs, to proceed to the place

where the animals were grazing to assist us in catching those we had bought. It was situated a few miles from the village, in a handsome valley, studded with cocoa-nut trees : a couple of hundred additional natives volunteered to join us. They proceeded cautiously in the first instance, until they surrounded the herd, which they succeeded in driving to an inclosure. One more expert than the rest then advanced under the cover of some trees with a long rope, at the end of which was a running noose. Having quietly waited for some time until a proper opportunity offered, he at length threw the rope, and succeeded in catching a young cow. On feeling the noose round her neck, she became quite furious, and made a desperate plunge at him, which he skilfully avoided by running up a cocoa-nut tree ; having previously fastened one end of the rope round the trunk. We had intrenched ourselves with the chiefs behind a stone wall, close to the herd ; and being apprehensive that the captive might break loose, we fired, and shot her. Upon hearing the report, the herd rushed furiously out of the inclosure, and ran at the natives ; but as

they had anticipated such a result, each man secured a retreat behind a tree ; and in a moment after the furious animals had gained their freedom three hundred cocoa-nut trees might have been seen, each manned with a native, who looked down with the full confidence of security on the enraged herd below. Finding it impossible to catch another, we were obliged to fire among them, and killed a second. A few shots without ball were then discharged, which drove them to their old pasture, and enabled the natives to descend. The king preserved these cattle for the purpose of bartering with ships touching there for provisions ; and although he killed none for the royal table, he very condescendingly accepted from us a present of a sirloin.

As we intended to engage some of the natives for the Company's service at the Columbia, and as the captain also required some to assist in working the ship (several of the crew being indifferent sailors), he demanded permission from 'Tamaahmaah to engage the number that should be deemed necessary : this was at once granted ; and Messrs. Holmes and Maninna were requested to

act as recruiting sergeants on the occasion, which duty they kindly undertook to perform. On the intelligence being announced, the vessel was crowded with numbers, all offering to "take on." With the assistance of the above gentlemen we selected twenty-six of the most able-bodied of these volunteers: sixteen for the Company's service, and ten for the ship's. We agreed to pay each man ten dollars a month, and a suit of clothes annually. An old experienced islander, who was called Boatswain Tom, and who had made several voyages both to Europe and America, was engaged to command them: he got fifteen dollars a month, and was to have the sole control of his countrymen. Several of the females also volunteered to accompany us, but we were obliged to decline their kind offers. Mr. Wadsworth, of whom I have already spoken, was also engaged for the Company's service, to act as an officer on sea or land, as occasion should require. He brought his lady with him, not being accustomed, as he declared, to live in a state of single blessedness.

On the 5th of April we got all our supplies on

board. They consisted of sixty hogs, two boats full of sugar-cane to feed them, some thousand cocoa-nuts, with as much bananas, plantains, taro, melons, &c., as could be conveniently stowed in the ship. The same evening we took leave of the king and royal family, and bade adieu to our kind white friends ; after which we embarked ; and on the following morning, Tuesday, April the 6th, we weighed anchor, and set sail for the Columbia. Krikapooree, the king's nephew, and several young chiefs, accompanied us three or four leagues from land, and took leave of us with tears in their eyes. The addition we received to our numbers in live stock, joined to the cargo of fruit, &c., lumbered our deck greatly, and annoyed the crew in working the ship. When any number of the natives were wanted to perform a particular duty, word was passed to Bos'n Tom ; who, to do him justice, betrayed none of the softer feelings of national partiality to his countrymen. The moment he gave " the dreadful word " it was followed by a horrid yell ; and with a rope's end he laid on the back and shoulders of every poor devil who did not happen to be as alert as he wished, accom-

panied by a laughable *mélange* of curses in broken English, and imprecations in his own language.

We had tolerably good easterly breezes, and nothing particular occurred until the 18th, at four P. M., when a man ahead cried out “Land on the weather-bow!” As we were then not more than half way between the islands and the American continent, we eagerly rushed on deck to feast our eyes with a view of our new discovery.

After looking at it for some time very attentively through his glass, the captain pronounced it to be an island, with a dark-brown soil, and apparently destitute of vegetation; and added, with marks of evident exultation, that he always felt certain we should fall in with unknown islands in these latitudes (about 35° north); and in that expectation had diverged materially from the usual course of vessels proceeding to the north-west coast. We now sounded, but got no bottom with one hundred fathoms: and while this was going on we were all busy in forming conjectures respecting this *terra incognita*. The first thing to be decided on was the name. One thought that Mr. *Astor*, being the owner of the ship, and the founder

of the company, had the best claim, and therefore moved that it be called "*Astor's Island*:" this having been seconded, an amendment was moved by another person, who argued that the ship had a prior right to the honour, and stated he would have it called "*Beaver Island*:" the amendment having been seconded, was about to be put, when the captain declared that, fond as he was of his ship, and highly as he respected his owner, he thought the claims of their immortal president superior to either, and that he would therefore, without consulting the wishes of any one, call it "*Maddison's Island*." Although there were few admirers of the "immortal" president on board, the captain's decision settled the controversy; for on such occasions he is always the high priest. Mr. Clarke said, if it proved any way fruitful, he would colonise it, and appoint Wadsworth, with his island beauty, king and queen. Some hoped the inhabitants would not be afraid of white men; while others cursed the inhabitants, particularly the females, and expressed a wish that the new discovery would contain some cooling simples. In the mean time, we kept standing under easy sail

for this unknown paradise ; but in proportion as we advanced the hills seemed to ascend, and blend their craggy summits with the passing clouds : a pale bright opening appeared to divide the land ; and the sad conviction was at length forced on us, that Maddison's Island was, like his immortality, based on a nebulous foundation : in fact, it turned out what sailors call " a cape fly-away island ;" and all our glorious speculations dissolved literally *in nubibus*.

This disappointment chagrined us much ; but none felt it more sensibly than the captain, who was quite chapfallen on the occasion. However, on the 1st of May, we made the real *terra firma*, in lat. 41° N., Cape Orford in sight. We coasted along-shore until the 5th, when we had the happiness of beholding the entrance of the long-wished-for Columbia, which empties itself into the Pacific in lat. 46° 19' N., and long. 124° W. Light baffling winds, joined to the captain's timidity, obliged us to stand off and on until the 8th, on which day we descried a white flag hoisted on Cape Disappointment, the northern extremity of the land at the entrance of the river.

A large fire was also kept burning on the cape all night, which served as a beacon. A dangerous bar runs across the mouth of the Columbia; the channel for crossing it is on the northern side close to the cape, and is very narrow, and from thence to the opposite point on the southern side, which is called Point Adams, extends a chain or reef of rocks and sand-banks, over which the dreadful roaring of the mighty waters of the Columbia, in forcing their passage to the ocean, is heard for miles distant.

Early on the morning of the 9th Mr. Rhodes was ordered out in the cutter, on the perilous duty of sounding the channel of the bar, and placing the buoys necessary for the safe guidance of the ship. While he was performing this duty we fired several guns; and, about ten o'clock in the morning, we were delighted with hearing the report of three cannon from the shore in answer to ours. Towards noon an Indian canoe was discovered making for us, and a few moments after a barge was perceived following it. Various were the hopes and fears by which we were agitated, as we waited in anxious expectation

the arrival of the strangers from whom we were to learn the fate of our predecessors, and of the party who had crossed the continent. Vague rumours had reached the Sandwich Islands from a coasting vessel, that the Tonquin had been cut off by the Indians, and every soul on board destroyed; and, since we came in sight of the river, the captain's ominous forebodings had almost prepared the weaker part of our people to hear that some dreadful fatality had befallen our infant establishment. Not even the sound of the cannon, and the sight of the flag and fire on the cape were proofs strong enough to shake his doubts. "An old bird was not to be caught with chaff:" he was too well acquainted with Indian cunning and treachery to be deceived by such appearances. It was possible enough that the savages might have surprised the fort, murdered its inmates, seized the property, fired the cannon, to induce us to cross the bar, which, when once effected, they could easily cut us off before we could get out again. He even carried his caution so far, as to order a party of armed men to be in readiness to receive our vi-

sitors. The canoe arrived first alongside: in it was an old Indian, blind of an eye, who appeared to be a chief, with six others, nearly naked, and the most repulsive looking beings that ever disgraced the fair form of humanity. The only intelligence we could obtain from them was, that the people in the barge were white like ourselves, and had a house on shore. A few minutes afterwards it came alongside, and dissipated all our fearful dreams of murder, &c., and we had the delightful, the inexpressible pleasure of shaking hands with Messrs. Duncan M'Dougall and Donald M'Lennan; the former a partner, and the latter a clerk of the Company, with eight Canadian boatmen. After our congratulations were over, they informed us, that on receiving intelligence the day before from the Indians that a ship was off the river, they came down from the fort, a distance of twelve miles, to Cape Disappointment, on which they hoisted the flag we had seen, and set fire to several trees to serve in lieu of a lighthouse.

The tide was now making in, and as Mr. Rhodes had returned from placing the buoys,

Mr. M'Lennan, who was well acquainted with the channel, took charge of the ship as pilot; and at half-past two P.M. we crossed the bar, on which we struck twice without sustaining any injury; shortly after which we dropped anchor in Baker's Bay, after a tedious voyage of six months and twenty-two days. Mr. M'Dougall informed us that the one-eyed Indian who had preceded him in the canoe was the principal chief of the Chinook nation, who reside on the northern side of the river near its mouth; that his name was Comcomly, and that he was much attached to the whites: we therefore made him a present, and gave some trifling articles to his attendants, after which they departed.

CHAPTER IV.

Account of the Tonquin—Loss of her chief mate, seven men, and two boats—Extraordinary escape of Weekes—Erection of Astoria—Mr. Thompson of the N. W. Company—Arrival of Messrs. Hunt and Mackenzie, and sketch of their journey over-land.

AFTER the vessel was securely moored Captain Sowles joined our party, and we took our leave of the good ship Beaver ; in which, after a voyage of six months and three weeks, we had travelled upwards of twenty thousand miles.

In the evening we arrived at the Company's establishment, which was called Fort Astoria in honour of Mr. Astor. Here we found five proprietors, nine clerks, and ninety artisans and canoe-men, or, as they are commonly called in the Indian country, *voyageurs*. We brought an addition

of thirty-six, including the islanders; so that our muster-roll, including officers, &c. amounted to one hundred and forty men.

The accounts which we received from our friends at Astoria were highly discouraging as to our future prospects, and deeply melancholy as to the past. But, that my readers may understand the situation of affairs at the time of our arrival, it will be necessary to take a short retrospect of the transactions that occurred antecedent to that period.

The ship Tonquin, to which I have alluded in the introduction, sailed from New York on the 6th September, 1810. She was commanded by Captain Jonathan Thorn, a gentleman who had been formerly a first lieutenant in the navy of the United States; and while in that service, during their short war with Algiers, had distinguished himself as a bold and daring officer. His manners were harsh and arbitrary, with a strong tincture of that peculiar species of American *amor patriæ*, the principal ingredient of which is a marked antipathy to Great Britain and its subjects.

Four partners, namely, Messrs. Alexander

M'Kay, Duncan M'Dougall, David and Robert Stuart, embarked in her, with eight clerks, and a number of artisans and *voyageurs*, all destined for the Company's establishment at the Columbia. Those gentlemen were all British subjects; and, although engaged with Americans in a commercial speculation, and sailing under the flag of the United States, were sincerely attached to their king and the country of their birth. Their patriotism was no recommendation to Captain Thorn, who adopted every means in his power to annoy and thwart them. To any person who has been at sea it is unnecessary to mention how easy it is for one of those nautical despots to play the tyrant, and the facilities which their situation affords, and of which they too often avail themselves, of harassing every one who is not slavishly subservient to their wishes.

Messrs. M'Kay, M'Dougall, and the Stuarts, had too much Highland blood in their veins to submit patiently to the haughty and uncivil treatment of the captain; and the consequence was, a series of quarrels and disagreeable recriminations, not merely in the cabin but on the quarterdeck.

They touched at the Falkland Islands for a supply of water; and while Mr. David Stuart and Mr. Franchere, with a party, were on shore, the captain, without any previous intimation, suddenly gave orders to weigh anchor, and stood out to sea, leaving the party on one of the most desert and uninhabitable islands in the world. The gentlemen on board expostulated in vain against this act of tyrannic cruelty, when Mr. Robert Stuart, nephew to the old gentleman who had been left on shore, seized a brace of pistols, and presenting one at the captain's head, threatened to blow out his brains if he did not instantly order the ship to lay to and wait for his uncle's party. Most part of the crew and officers witnessed this scene; and as they appeared to sympathise deeply with young Stuart, the captain thought it more prudent to submit, and gave orders accordingly to shorten sail, and wait the arrival of Mr. Stuart's party.

The determined resolution evinced by young Mr. Stuart on this occasion, and the apparent apathy of his officers, who stood quietly by while a pistol was presented to his head, were never forgiven by Captain Thorn.

The Tonquin doubled Cape Horn in safety, and arrived in the middle of February at the Sandwich Islands, from which place they took ten natives for the establishment, and sailed for the coast on the 1st of March.

On the 23rd of March they arrived at the mouth of the Columbia; and although it blew a stiff breeze, the captain ordered Mr. Fox, the chief mate, with two American sailors and two Canadian *voyageurs*, to proceed in the long-boat towards the bar, for the purpose of sounding the channel.

From the threatening appearance of the sky and the violence of the gale, Mr. M'Kay thought this a most hazardous undertaking, and implored Captain Thorn to postpone it until the weather became more moderate. His orders however were peremptory; and finding all remonstrance useless, Mr. Fox with his little crew embarked, and proceeded to fulfil his instructions. That unfortunate officer seemed to have a presentiment of his approaching fate, for on quitting the vessel he took an affectionate farewell of all his friends; to some of whom he mentioned he was certain they would never see him again. His prediction was

verified ; but we could never ascertain correctly the particulars of their fate. It is supposed however that the tide setting in, joined to the violence of the wind, drove the boat among the breakers, where it and its unfortunate crew must have been dashed to pieces.

The ship stood off and on during the 24th, and on the 25th, the wind having moderated, she stood in for Cape Disappointment. Mr. Aikin, one of the officers, accompanied by Weekes, the smith, Coles, the sailmaker, and two Sandwich islanders, were sent ahead in the jolly-boat to ascertain the lowest depth of water in the channel ; the ship in the mean time following after, under easy sail. Aikin reported by signal that there was water sufficient ; upon which the captain ordered all sail to be crowded, and stood in for the bar. The jolly-boat was now ordered to fall back and join the ship ; but having unfortunately got too far to the southward, it was drawn within the influence of the current, and carried with fearful rapidity towards the breakers. It passed within pistol-shot of the vessel, its devoted crew crying out in the wildest accents of despair for assistance. This

however was impossible, for at that moment the Tonquin struck on the bar ; and the apprehension of instant destruction precluded the possibility of making any attempt to save the jolly-boat, which by this time was carried out of sight. The wind now moderated to a gentle breeze ; but owing to the tide setting out strongly, the water became so low that the ship struck several times ; and to add to the horror of their situation, they were quickly surrounded by the darkness of night. During an awful interval of three hours the sea beat over the vessel ; and at times some of the crew imagined they heard the screams of their lost companions borne by the night winds over the foaming billows of the bar. A little after twelve o'clock however the tide set in strongly, with a fresh breeze from the westward ; and all hands having set to work, they providentially succeeded in extricating themselves from their perilous situation, and worked the ship into Baker's Bay, inside Cape Disappointment, where they found a safe asylum. It blew a perfect gale the remainder of the night.

On the morning of the 26th some of the natives

came on board. They appeared to be very friendly, and betrayed no symptoms of fear or distrust. Parties were immediately despatched towards the northern shore, and round the cape, in order to ascertain, if possible, the fate of the two boats.

Shortly after one of them returned accompanied by Weekes, who gave the following account of his miraculous escape from a watery grave. "When we passed the vessel, the boat, owing to the want of a rudder, became quite unmanageable, and notwithstanding all our exertions we were carried into the northern edge of the great chain of breakers. The tide and current however were setting out so strongly, that we were absolutely carried through the reef without sustaining any injury, but immediately on the outer edge a heavy sea struck us, and the boat was upset. Messrs. Aikin and Coles disappeared at once, and I never saw them afterwards. On recovering my first shock, I found myself close to the Sandwich islanders, who had stripped off their clothes with extraordinary dispatch. We all seized the boat, and after much difficulty suc-

ceeded in righting it. We then got out a little of the water, which enabled one of the islanders to enter the boat, and he quickly baled out the remainder. His companion also recovered the oars, and we then embarked. I endeavoured to persuade the two poor islanders to row, well knowing the exertion would keep them alive; but it was quite useless, they were so spent from fatigue, and benumbed by the cold, that they refused to do any thing, and threw themselves down in the boat, apparently resigned to meet their fate. I had no notion however of giving up my life in that manner, and therefore pulled away at the oars with all my strength. About midnight one of my unfortunate companions died, and his surviving countryman flung himself on the body, from which I found it impossible to dislodge him. I continued hard at work during the night, taking care to keep to the northward of the bar, and at daylight found myself close to a sandy beach, on which the surf beat heavily. I was nearly exhausted, and therefore determined to run all risks to get ashore. I fortunately succeeded, and ran the boat on the beach. I then assisted the islander, who had some signs of life still in him,

to land; but the poor fellow was too weak to follow me. I was therefore obliged to leave him, and shortly after fell on a well-beaten path, which in a few hours brought me in sight of the ship, when I met the party who conducted me on board. Thanks to the Almighty for my wonderful escape!"

The people who went in search of the surviving islander did not find him until the following morning, when they discovered him in a deplorable state, close to some rocks. They carried him to the ship; and in a few days, by the proper and humane treatment of Mr. Franchere, he was perfectly restored to his health.

Some time was occupied after their arrival in looking out for a proper place to build their fort; and at length, on the 12th of April, they selected a handsome and commanding situation, called Point George, twelve miles from the cape, and on the south side of the river. The keel of a schooner of thirty tons' burden was also laid at the same time, the skeleton of which had been brought out from New York.

During the month of May Messrs. M'Kay,

Stuart, Franchere, and Matthews, made several excursions up the river as far as the first rapids, in which they were well received by the natives, from whom they collected a quantity of furs.

It having been arranged that the Tonquin was to make a coasting excursion as far as Cook's River, and touch at the various harbours between that place and the Columbia, she weighed anchor on the 1st of June, and dropped down to Baker's Bay. Mr. M'Kay, and Mr. Lewis, one of the clerks, embarked in her for the purpose of obtaining a correct knowledge of the various tribes on the coast, it being intended that after her cruise to the northward the ship was to return to the Columbia, take what furs they might have purchased during her absence, which the captain was to dispose of in Canton, from whence he was to return to New York with a cargo of Chinese goods.

Mr. Mumford, the chief mate, in consequence of a dispute with Captain Thorn, refused to proceed farther with him, and was engaged by the Company to take the command of the little schooner when finished.

The *Tonquin* took her final departure from the *Columbia* on the 5th of June, with a fair wind, and passed the bar in safety.

In the month of July Mr. David Thompson, astronomer to the North-west Company, of which he was also a proprietor, arrived with nine men in a canoe at Astoria, from the interior. This gentleman came on a voyage of discovery to the *Columbia* preparatory to the North-west Company forming a settlement at the entrance of the river. He remained at Astoria until the latter end of July, when he took his departure for the interior; Mr. David Stuart, with three clerks and a party of Canadians accompanying him, for the purpose of selecting a proper place on the upper parts of the river for a trading establishment.

Early in the month of August a party of Indians from Gray's Harbour arrived at the mouth of the *Columbia* for the purpose of fishing. They told the Chinooks that the *Tonquin* had been cut off by one of the northern tribes, and that every soul on board had been massacred. This intelligence was not at first believed; but several other rumours of a similar nature having reached As-

toria, caused considerable uneasiness, particularly as the month passed away without any news of a satisfactory nature having been received.

During the month of September the people at the fort were kept in a state of feverish alarm by various reports of an intention on the part of the natives to surprise and destroy them. October commenced, and the period fixed for the return of the Tonquin had long since elapsed, still no intelligence of her arrived, with the exception of farther reports of her destruction, accompanied by additional evidence, of a nature so circumstantial as to leave little doubt but that some dreadful fatality had occurred.

On the 5th of October, Messrs. Pillet and M'Lennan, two of the clerks who had gone to the interior with Mr. D. Stuart, returned to Astoria, accompanied by a free hunter named Bruguier, and two Iroquois hunters. They stated that Mr. Stuart had chosen a place for a trading post about seven hundred miles up the Columbia, at the mouth of a river called Oakinagan, and among a friendly tribe, who appeared to be well furnished with beaver. About this period the schooner was

completed and launched. She was called the *Dolly*, in honour of Mrs. Astor ; and as provisions at the fort became scarce, she was despatched up the river for a supply, under the command of Mr. R. Stuart and Mr. Mumford.

The dark and dismal months of November and December rolled over their heads without bringing them any certain intelligence of the Tonquin. During this period it rained incessantly ; and the Indians had withdrawn themselves from the banks of the Columbia to their winter-quarters in the sheltered recesses of the forests, and in the vicinity of springs or small rivulets.

They continued in this state of disagreeable anxiety until the 18th of January, 1812, when their drooping spirits were somewhat raised by the arrival of Mr. Donald M'Kenzie with two canoes from the interior. This gentleman was accompanied by Mr. M'Lellan, a proprietor, Mr. Read, a clerk, and ten men. He had left St. Louis in the month of August, 1810, in company with Mr. Hunt. They passed the winter of that year at a place called Nadwau, on the banks of the Missouri, where they were joined by Messrs.

M'Lellan, Crooks, and Miller, three American traders, connected with Mr. Astor.

In the spring of 1811 they ascended the Missouri in two large barges, until they arrived on the lands of a powerful tribe named the Arikaraws. Here they met a Spanish trader, Mr. Manuel Lisa, to whom they sold their barges and a quantity of their merchandise.

Having purchased one hundred and thirty horses from the Indians, they set off in the beginning of August on their land journey, to cross the Rocky Mountains. Apprehensive of coming in contact with the Black Feet, a warlike and savage tribe, who have a strong antipathy to the white men, they were obliged to proceed as far south as the latitude of 40°, from whence they turned into a north-west course. This brought them to an old trading post, situated on the banks of a small river; and as they had no doubt it would bring them to the Columbia, they immediately set about making canoes, for the purpose of descending that river.

Mr. Miller, not liking the aspect of affairs at this place, requested permission to return to the

United States, which was granted; and a few men were allowed to accompany him on his way back.

The party, which now consisted of about sixty people, commenced their voyage downwards; but from the rapidity of the current, and the number of dangerous rapids, they determined, after having lost one man and a portion of their baggage, to abandon such a perilous navigation, and undertake the remainder of their journey on foot.

In pursuance of this resolution they divided into four parties, under the commands of Messrs. M'Kenzie, Hunt, M'Lellan, and Crooks; still keeping in view their original intention of following the course of the river. Messrs. M'Kenzie and M'Lellan took the right bank, and Messrs. Hunt and Crooks the left. They were under a strong impression that a few days would bring them to the Columbia, but they were miserably disappointed. For three weeks they followed the course of the river, which was one continued torrent; and the banks of which, particularly the northern, consisted of high precipitous rocks, rising abruptly from the water's edge. The greater part

of this period was one of extreme suffering. Their provisions became shortly exhausted, and they were reduced to the necessity of broiling even the leather of their shoes to sustain nature; while, to complete their misfortunes, they were often unable to descend the steep declivities of the rocks for a drink of the water which they saw flowing beneath their feet.

From the tormenting privations which they experienced in following the course of this stream, they called it Mad River; and in speaking of it afterwards, the Canadians, from the bitterness of their recollections, denominated it *la maudite rivière enragée*. Mr. Hunt's party did not suffer so much as those on the right bank, in consequence of occasionally meeting some of the natives; who, although they always fled on perceiving them, left their horses behind. The party were obliged to kill a few of these animals, and in payment for them left some goods near their owners' huts.

After a separation of some days the two parties came in sight of each other; and Mr. Hunt had a canoe made out of the skin of a horse, in which he

sent some meat over to his famishing friends. He also suggested the idea of their crossing over in the canoe one by one to the south side, where they would at all events have a better chance of escaping death by starvation. This was readily agreed to; but the attempt was unfortunately unsuccessful. One of the best swimmers embarked in the canoe; but it had scarcely reached the centre of the river when, owing to the impetuosity of the current, it upset, and the poor *voyageur* sunk to rise no more.

Finding the impracticability of their reunion by this means, they continued to pursue their respective courses, and in a few days after Mr. M'Kenzie's party fell on a considerable river, which they subsequently ascertained to be Lewis' River. Here they met a tribe of friendly Indians, from whom they purchased several horses, and with renovated spirits they pursued their journey along the banks of the principal river. Among this tribe they found a young white man in a state of mental derangement. He had however lucid intervals, and informed them that his name was Archibald Petton, and that he was a native of

Connecticut; that he had ascended the Missouri with Mr. Henry, an American trader, who built the house our people saw at the upper part of Mad River; that about three years ago the place was attacked by the savages, who massacred every man belonging to the establishment with the exception of himself; and that having escaped unperceived, he wandered about for several weeks until he met the friendly tribe with whom we found him. The dreadful scenes he had witnessed, joined to the sufferings he had gone through, produced a partial derangement of his intellect. His disorder was of an harmless nature; and as it appeared probable that civilised companionship would in the course of time restore him to his reason, Mr. M'Kenzie very humanely brought him along with the party.

On arriving at the entrance of Lewis' River, they obtained canoes from the natives in exchange for their horses; and meeting with no obstruction from thence downwards, arrived at Astoria on the 18th of January, 1812. Their concave cheeks,* protuberant bones, and tattered garments, strongly indicated the dreadful extent of their privations;

but their health appeared uninjured, and their gastronomic powers unimpaired.

From the day that the unlucky attempt was made to cross in the canoe Mr. M'Kenzie had seen nothing of Mr. Hunt's party, and he was of opinion they would not be able to reach the fort until the spring was far advanced. He was however mistaken; for on the 15th of February Mr. Hunt, with thirty men, one woman, and two children, arrived at Astoria.

This gentleman stated that shortly after his last separation from the northern party he arrived among a friendly tribe, whose village was situated in the plains. They treated him and his party with great hospitality; in consequence of which he remained ten days with them, for the double purpose of recruiting his men and of looking for one of his hunters, who had been lost for some days. Having received no intelligence of the man, Mr. Hunt resumed his journey, leaving Mr. Crooks, with five men who were much exhausted, among the Indians, who promised to pay every attention to them, and conduct them part of the way downwards on their recovery.

Mr. Hunt in the mean time fell on the Colum-

bia, some distance below its junction with Lewis' River; and having also obtained canoes, arrived safely on the day above mentioned. The corporeal appearance of his party was somewhat superior to that of Mr. Mackenzie's, but their outward habiliments were equally ragged.

The accession of so many hungry stomachs to the half-starved garrison at Astoria would have produced serious inconvenience had not the fishing season fortunately commenced earlier than was anticipated, and supplied them with abundance of a small delicious fish resembling pilchard, and which is the same mentioned by Lewis and Clarke as anchovy.

On the 30th of March the following departures took place: Mr. Read for New York, charged with dispatches to Mr. Astor, accompanied by Mr. M'Lellan, who quitted the country in disgust. This gentleman had fancied that a fortune was to be made with extraordinary celerity in the Columbia; but finding his calculations had exceeded the bounds of probability, he preferred renewing his addresses to the fickle jade in a country less subject to starvation and fighting.

Messrs. Farnham and M'Gillis, with a party,

also embarked for the purpose of proceeding to the head of Mad River, for the trading goods which Mr. Hunt had deposited there *en cache*; and Mr. Robert Stuart set off at the same time with a fresh supply for his uncle's establishment at Oakinagan.

CHAPTER V.

Particulars of the destruction of the Tonquin and crew—Indians attack a party ascending the river—Description of fort, natives, and the country.

It is now time to return to the Tonquin, of which no news had been heard during the winter, with the exception of the flying rumours already alluded to. That vessel, as mentioned in the preceding chapter, sailed from the Columbia on the 5th of June 1811, on a trading speculation to the northward; and Mr. M'Kay took on board, as an interpreter, a native of Gray's Harbour, who was well acquainted with the various dialects of the tribes on the coast. From this Indian the following melancholy particulars were learned.

A few days after their departure from the Co-

lumbia they anchored opposite a large village, named *New Whitty*, in the vicinity of *Nootka*, where Mr. M'Kay immediately opened a smart trade with the natives. He went on shore with a few men ; was received in the most friendly manner, and slept a couple of nights at the village. During this period several of the natives visited the vessel with furs. The harsh and unbending manners of the captain were not calculated to win their esteem ; and having struck one of their principal men whom he had caught in a petty theft, a conspiracy was formed by the friends of the chief to surprise and cut off the vessel. The faithful interpreter, having discovered their designs, lost no time in acquainting Mr. M'Kay, who instantly hurried on board for the purpose of warning the captain of the intended attack. That evening Mr. M'Kay told the interpreter that the captain only laughed at the information, and said he could never believe that a parcel of lazy thieving Indians would have the courage to attack such a ship as his. The natives, in the mean time, apprehensive from Mr. M'Kay's sudden return that their plans were suspected, visited the ship in

small numbers, totally unarmed, in order to throw our people off their guard. Even the chief who had been struck by Captain Thorn, and who was the head of the conspiracy, came on board in a manner seemingly friendly, and apparently forgetful of the insult he had received.

Early in the morning of the day previous to that on which the ship was to leave New Whitty a couple of large canoes, each containing about twenty men, appeared along-side. They brought several small bundles of furs; and, as the sailors imagined they came for the purpose of trading, were allowed to come on deck. Shortly after another canoe, with an equal number, arrived also with furs; and it was quickly followed by two others, full of men carrying beaver, otter, and other valuable skins. No opposition was made to their coming on board; but the officer of the watch perceiving a number of other canoes pushing off, became suspicious of their intentions, and warned Captain Thorn of the circumstance. He immediately came on the quarter-deck, accompanied by Mr. M'Kay and the interpreter. The latter, on observing that they all wore short cloaks

or mantles of skins, which was by no means a general custom, at once knew their designs were hostile, and told Mr. M'Kay of his suspicions. That gentleman immediately apprised Captain Thorn of the circumstances, and begged of him to lose no time in clearing the ship of the intruders. This caution was however treated with contempt by the captain, who remarked, that with the arms they had on board they would be more than a match for three times the number. The sailors in the mean time had all come on the deck, which was crowded with the Indians, who completely blocked up the passages, and obstructed the men in the performance of their various duties. The captain requested them to retire, to which they paid no attention. He then told them he was about going to sea, and had given orders to the men to raise the anchor; that he hoped they would go away quietly; but if they refused, he should be compelled to force their departure. He had scarcely finished, when, at a signal given by one of the chiefs, a loud and frightful yell was heard from the assembled savages, who commenced a sudden and simultaneous attack on the

officers and crew with knives, bludgeons, and short sabres, which they had concealed under their robes.

Mr. M'Kay was one of the first attacked. One Indian gave him a severe blow with a bludgeon, which partially stunned him; upon which he was seized by five or six others, who threw him overboard into a canoe alongside, where he quickly recovered, and was allowed to remain for some time uninjured.

Captain Thorn made an ineffectual attempt to reach the cabin for his fire-arms, but was overpowered by numbers. His only weapon was a jack-knife, with which he killed four of his savage assailants by ripping up their bellies, and mutilated several others. Covered with wounds, and exhausted from the loss of blood, he rested himself for a moment by leaning on the tiller wheel, when he received a dreadful blow from a weapon called a *pautumaugan*,* on the back part of the head, which felled him to the deck. The death-dealing knife fell from his hand; and his

* A species of half sabre, half club, from two to three feet in length, six inches in breadth, and double edged.

savage butchers, after extinguishing the few sparks of life that still remained, threw his mangled body overboard.

On seeing the captain's fate, our informant, who was close to him, and who had hitherto escaped uninjured, jumped into the water, and was taken into a canoe by some women, who partially covered his body with mats. He states that the original intention of the enemy was to detain Mr. M'Kay a prisoner ; and, after securing the vessel, to give him his liberty, on obtaining a ransom from Astoria : but on finding the resistance made by the captain and crew, the former of whom had killed one of the principal chiefs, their love of gain gave way to revenge, and they resolved to destroy him. The last time the ill-fated gentleman was seen, his head was hanging over the side of a canoe, and three savages, armed with *pautumau-gans*, were battering out his brains.

In the mean time the devoted crew, who had maintained the unequal conflict with unparalleled bravery, became gradually overpowered. Three of them, John Anderson the boatswain, John Weekes, the carpenter, and Stephen Weekes, who

had so narrowly escaped at the Columbia, succeeded, after a desperate struggle, in gaining possession of the cabin, the entrance to which they securely fastened inside. The Indians now became more cautious, for they well knew there were plenty of fire-arms below; and they had already experienced enough of the prowess of the three men while on deck, and armed only with hand-spikes, to dread approaching them while they had more mortal weapons at their command.

Anderson and his two companions seeing their commander and the crew dead and dying about them, and that no hope of escape remained, and feeling moreover the uselessness of any farther opposition, determined on taking a terrible revenge. Two of them therefore set about laying a train to the powder magazine, while the third addressed some Indians from the cabin windows, who were in canoes, and gave them to understand that if they were permitted to depart unmolested in one of the ship's boats, they would give them quiet possession of the vessel without firing a shot; stipulating however that no canoe should remain near them while getting into the

boat. The anxiety of the barbarians to obtain possession of the plunder, and their disinclination to risk any more lives, induced them to embrace this proposition with eagerness, and the pinnacle was immediately brought astern. The three heroes having by this time perfected their dreadful arrangements, and ascertained that no Indian was watching them, gradually lowered themselves from the cabin windows into the boat; and having fired the train, quickly pushed off towards the mouth of the harbour, no obstacle being interposed to prevent their departure.

Hundreds of the enemy now rushed on deck to seize the long-expected prize, shouting yells of victory; but their triumph was of short duration. Just as they had burst open the cabin door, an explosion took place, which in an instant hurled upwards of two hundred savages into eternity, and dreadfully injured as many more. The interpreter, who had by this time reached land, states he saw many mutilated bodies floating near the beach, while heads, arms, and legs, together with fragments of the ship, were thrown to a considerable distance on the shore.

The first impression of the survivors was, that the Master of Life had sent forth the Evil Spirit from the waters to punish them for their cruelty to the white people. This belief, joined to the consternation occasioned by the shock, and the reproaches and lamentations of the wives and other relatives of the sufferers, paralysed for a time the exertions of the savages, and favoured the attempt of Anderson and his brave comrades to escape. They rowed hard for the mouth of the harbour, with the intention, as is supposed, of coasting along the shore to the Columbia ; but after passing the bar, a head wind and flowing tide drove them back, and compelled them to land late at night in a small cove, where they fancied themselves free from danger ; and where, weak from the loss of blood, and the harassing exertions of the day, they fell into a profound sleep.

In the mean time, the terror of the Indians had in some degree subsided, and they quickly discovered that it was by human agency so many of their warriors had been destroyed. They therefore determined on having the lives of those who caused the explosion ; and being aware, from the

state of the wind and tide, that the boat could not put to sea, a party proceeded after dark cautiously along the shore of the bay, until they arrived at the spot where their helpless victims lay slumbering. Bleeding and exhausted, they opposed but a feeble resistance to their savage conquerors; and about midnight their heroic spirits mingled with those of their departed comrades.

Thus perished the last of the gallant crew of the Tonquin: and in reflecting on their melancholy fate, it is deeply to be regretted that there was no person of sufficient influence at Astoria to bring about a reconciliation between Captain Thorn and Mr. M'Kay; for were it not for the deplorable hostility and consequent want of union that existed between these two brave men, it is more than probable this dreadful catastrophe would never have occurred.*

On the morning of the 11th of May, the day after our arrival, while walking with some of my companions in front of the fort, indulging in gloomy

* From the particular description given by our informant of the dress and personal appearance of Anderson and the two Weekes's, we had no doubt of their identity.

reflections on the fate of the Tonquin, and the unpromising appearance of our general affairs, we were surprised by the arrival of two canoes with Messrs. Robert Stuart, M'Lellan, Reed, and Farnham, together with Messrs. David Stuart, and R. Crooks. The unexpected return of the four first individuals, who had only left the fort on the 30th March, was caused by a serious rencontre which they had with the natives in ascending. On arriving at the portage of the falls, which is very long and fatiguing, several of the Indians in a friendly manner tendered their horses to transport the goods. Mr. Stuart, having no suspicion of their dishonesty, gladly accepted the offer, and entrusted a few of them with several small packets of merchandise to carry. On arriving, however, in a rocky and solitary part of the portage, the rascals turned their horses' heads into a narrow pathway and galloped off with the goods, with which they escaped. Their comrades on foot in the mean time crowded about the *voyageurs* who were carrying the packages, and as Mr. Stuart observed the necessity of greater precaution, he took his post at the upper end of the portage, leaving Messrs. Reed and

M'Lellan in charge of the rear-guard. Mr. Reed was the bearer of the dispatches, and had a tin case, in which they were contained, flung over his shoulders. Its brightness attracted the attention of the natives, and they resolved to obtain possession of the prize. A group therefore patiently watched his motions for some time, until they observed he had separated himself from M'Lellan, and gone ahead a short distance. The moment they supposed he was alone they sprung on him, seized his arms, and succeeded in capturing the tin case after a brave resistance, in the course of which he was knocked down twice, and nearly killed. Mr. M'Lellan, who had been an attentive observer of the whole transaction, instantly fired, and one of the robbers fell; upon which his companions fled, not however without securing the plunder. Mr. M'Lellan, imagining that Mr. Reed had been killed, immediately joined Mr. Stuart, and urged that gentleman to fly from a place so pregnant with danger. This, however, he refused until he was satisfied respecting Mr. Reed's fate; and taking a few men with him, he repaired towards the spot where Reed had been attacked.

The latter had in the mean time somewhat recovered from the effects of his wounds, and was slowly dragging himself along when Mr. Stuart's party came to his assistance, and conducted him to the upper end of the portage in safety. The loss of the dispatches determined Mr. Stuart to postpone Mr. Reed's journey to New York, and the whole party proceeded to Oakinagan, the post established by Mr. David Stuart. They remained here only a few days, and early in May left it on their return to Fort Astoria. On their way down, near the entrance of the Shoshoné river, they fell in with Mr. R. Crooks and a Kentucky hunter, named John Day, in a state of miserable destitution.

I have already mentioned that this gentleman, with five of his men, owing to their inability to continue the journey from excessive fatigue, had been left by Mr. Hunt among a tribe of friendly Indians, supposed to be a branch of the extensive Snake nation. Finding, however, that they had nothing to expect from the strangers, these savages, shortly after the departure of Mr. Hunt, robbed them of every article in their possession,

even to their shirts, in exchange for which they gave them a few old skins to cover their nakedness.

The miserable party, thus attired, and without any provisions, recommenced their journey to the Columbia, on the banks of which they arrived a few days previous to the descent of Mr. Stuart's party.

Here was a frightful addition to our stock of disasters. Fighting, robbery, and starvation, in the interior, with drownings, massacres, and apprehensions of farther attacks from the Indians on the coast, formed a combination sufficient to damp the ardor of the youngest, or the courage of the most enterprising. The retrospect was gloomy, and the future full of "shadows, clouds, and darkness." The scene before us, however, was novel, and for a time our ideas were diverted from the thoughts of "battle, murder, and sudden death," to the striking peculiarities connected with our present situation.

The spot selected for the fort was on a handsome eminence called *Point George*, which commanded an extensive view of the majestic Columbia in front, bounded by the bold and thickly

wooded northern shore. On the right, about three miles distant, a long, high and rocky peninsula covered with timber, called *Tongue Point*, extended a considerable distance into the river from the southern side with which it was connected by a narrow neck of land; while on the extreme left, *Cape Disappointment*, with the bar and its terrific chain of breakers, were distinctly visible.

The buildings consisted of apartments for the proprietors and clerks, with a capacious dining-hall for both, extensive warehouses for the trading goods and furs, a provision store, a trading shop, smith's forge, carpenter's workshop, &c. The whole surrounded by stockades forming a square, and reaching about fifteen feet over the ground. A gallery ran round the stockades, in which loop-holes were pierced sufficiently large for musketry. Two strong bastions built of logs commanded the four sides of the square: each bastion had two stories, in which a number of chosen men slept every night. A six-pounder was placed in the lower story, and they were both well provided with small arms.

Immediately in front of the fort was a gentle

declivity sloping down to the river's side, which had been turned into an excellent kitchen garden ; and a few hundred yards to the left, a tolerable wharf had been run out, by which *bateaux* and boats were enabled at low water to land their cargoes without sustaining any damage. An impenetrable forest of gigantic pine rose in the rear ; and the ground was covered with a thick underwood of brier and huckleberry, intermingled with fern and honeysuckle.

Numbers of the natives crowded in and about the fort. They were most uncouth-looking objects ; and not strongly calculated to impress us with a favourable opinion of aboriginal beauty, or the purity of Indian manners. A few of the men were partially covered, but the greater number were unannoyed by vestments of any description. Their eyes were black, piercing, and treacherous ; their ears slit up, and ornamented with strings of beads ; the cartilage of their nostrils perforated, and adorned with pieces of *hyaquau* placed horizontally ; while their heads presented an inclined plane from the crown to the upper part of the nose, totally unlike our European rotundity of

cranium ; and their bodies besmeared with whale oil, gave them an appearance horribly disgusting. Then the women,—Oh ye gods ! With the same auricular, olfactory, and craniological peculiarities, they exhibited loose hanging breasts, short dirty teeth, skin saturated with blubber, bandy legs, and a waddling gait ; while their only dress consisted of a kind of petticoat, or rather kilt, formed of small strands of cedar bark twisted into cords, and reaching from the waist to the knee. This covering in calm weather, or in an erect position, served all the purposes of concealment ; but in a breeze, or when indulging their favourite position of squatting, formed a miserable shield in defence of decency : and worse than all, their repulsive familiarities rendered them objects insupportably odious ; particularly when contrasted with the lively eyes, handsome features, fine teeth, open countenance, and graceful carriage of the interesting islanders whom we had lately left.

From these ugly specimens of mortality we turned with pleasure to contemplate the productions of their country, amongst the most wonderful of which are the fir-trees. The largest

species grow to an immense size, and one immediately behind the fort at the height of ten feet from the surface of the earth measured forty-six feet in circumference ! The trunk of this tree had about one hundred and fifty feet free from branches. Its top had been some time before blasted by lightning ; and to judge by comparison, its height when perfect must have exceeded three hundred feet ! This was however an extraordinary tree in that country, and was denominated by the Canadians *Le Roi de Pins*.*

The general size however of the different species of fir far exceeds any thing on the east side of the Rocky Mountains ; and prime sound pine from two hundred to two hundred and eighty feet in height, and from twenty to forty feet in circumference, are by no means uncommon.

Buffon asserts that “ living nature is less active, less energetic in the new world than the old,” which he attributes to the prevalence of moisture

* A pine tree has been subsequently discovered in the Umpqua country, to the southward of the Columbia, the circumference of which is 57 feet ; its height 210 feet without branches !

and deficiency of heat in America. This assertion was ably combated by the late Mr. Jefferson ; but, without entering into the arguments of these celebrated philosophers, we may safely state, that if America be inferior to the old continent in the animal world, she can at least assert her superiority in the vegetable.

En passant, I may here remark, that although constant rains prevail eight months out of the twelve, and during the remaining four, which are the summer months, the heat is far from excessive, the large and stately elk, which are numerous about the lower shores of the Columbia, are equal, if not superior, in size to those found in the hottest and driest parts of the world.

There are five or six different species of fir, with the peculiar qualities of which I am unacquainted. They split even, make good canoes, yield little ashes, scarcely produce any gum, and are excellent for building and other domestic purposes.

Our table was daily supplied with elk, wild fowl, and fish. Of the last, we feasted on the royal sturgeon, which is here large, white, and firm ; unrivalled salmon ; and abundance of the

sweet little anchovy, which is taken in such quantities by the Indians, that we have seen their houses garnished with several hundred strings of them, dry and drying. We had them generally twice a day, at breakfast and dinner, and in a few weeks got such a surfeit, that few of us for years afterwards tasted an anchovy.

We remained upwards of six weeks at the fort, preparing for our grand expedition into the interior. During this period I went on several short excursions to the villages of various tribes up the river and about the bay. The natives generally received us with friendship and hospitality. They vary little in their habits or language; and the perfect uniformity in the shape of their heads would, I fancy, puzzle the phrenological skill of the most learned disciples of Gall or Spurzheim. I made a few midnight visits to their cemeteries, from which I abstracted a couple of skulls, which appeared totally devoid of any peculiar organic development. I regret that our travelling arrangements prevented me from bringing them across the mountains; for, without ocular proof, I fear the faculty could not be brought to believe

that the human head was capable of being moulded to a shape so unlike the great mass of mankind. This however is dangerous ground ; and I shall not pursue the subject farther, lest I might provoke the *gall* of the believers in the theory of craniology, among whom, I am aware, may be reckoned some of the most eminent men in the literary world.

We also visited Fort Clatsop, the place where Captains Lewis and Clarke spent the winter of 1805-6 ; an accurate description of which is given in the journal of those enterprising travellers. The logs of the house were still standing, and marked with the names of several of their party.

The most striking peculiarity of the immense forests which we observed in the course of these excursions was the total absence of the “wood notes wild” of the feathered tribe ; and, except in the vicinity of a village, their deep and imperious gloom resembles the silence and solitude of death.

CHAPTER VI.

Departure from Astoria—Description of our party, lading, &c.—Appearance of river and islands—Fleas and musquitoes—First rapids, dangerous accident—Indian cemetery—Ugly Indians—Gibraltar—Cape Horn—The narrows and falls—Change in the appearance of the country—Attempt at robbery—Mounted Indians.

IN travelling through the Indian country several days must necessarily elapse devoid of interesting matter; and to the general reader a succinct detail of the diurnal proceedings of Indian traders would be rather dry. I do not profess to write a journal, and shall therefore make no apology for sparing my readers the trouble of perusing in every page the verbose accuracy which details, that in summer journies we rise each morning between three and four o'clock, breakfast between nine and ten, and encamp between six and seven in the evening; and that, while on the water, few

days elapse in which we are not obliged to put ashore several times to repair the damage sustained by our canoes in passing rapids, portages, or sunken trees.

On the 29th of June, 1812, all the necessary arrangements having been perfected, we took our departure from Astoria for the interior. Our party consisted of three proprietors, nine clerks, fifty-five Canadians, twenty Sandwich islanders,* and Messrs. Crooks, M'Lolland, and R. Stuart, who, with eight men, were to proceed with dispatches to St. Louis. Messrs. Hunt, M'Dougall, Clapp, Halsey, and Franchere, remained at the fort. The Beaver had previously sailed for Canton, whence it was intended she should return to New York.

We travelled in *bateaux* and light-built wooden canoes: the former had eight, and the latter six men. Our lading consisted of guns and ammunition, spears, hatchets, knives, beaver traps, copper and brass kettles, white and green blankets, blue, green, and red cloths, calicoes, beads, rings,

* The Tonquin had brought fifteen of the Sandwich islanders from Whoahoo, which, joined with those we brought, amounted to thirty-one. Eleven remained at the fort.

thimbles, hawk-bells, &c.; and our provisions of beef, pork, flour, rice, biscuits, tea, sugar, with a moderate quantity of rum, wine, &c.: the soft and hard goods were secured in bales and boxes, and the liquids in kegs, holding on an average nine gallons: the guns were stowed in long cases. From thirty to forty of these packages and kegs were placed in each vessel, and the whole was covered by an oil-cloth or tarpaulin, to preserve them from wet. Each canoe and barge had from six to eight men rowing or paddling, independent of the passengers.

The Columbia is a noble river, uninterrupted by rapids for one hundred and seventy miles; one hundred of which are navigable for vessels of three hundred tons. It is seldom less than a mile wide; but in some places its breadth varies from two to five miles. The shores are generally bold and thickly wooded. Pine in all its varieties predominates, and is mixed with white oak, ash, beech, poplar, alder, crab, and cotton wood, with an undergrowth of briers, &c., through which our hunters made many ineffectual attempts to pass. The navigation is often

obstructed by sand-banks, which are scattered over different parts of the river below the rapids, and are dry at low water. In the neighbourhood of these sand-banks the shores are generally low, and present some fine flat bottoms of rich meadow ground, bordered by a profusion of blackberry and other wild fruit shrubs: in the deep and narrow parts of the channel the shores are bolder. The river, up to the rapids, is covered with several islands, from one to three miles in length; some of which are fine meadows, and others well wooded. Great caution is required to avoid sunken trees, called snags or planters, and by the Canadians *chicots*, which are generally concealed under the surface of the water; and which, if they come in contact with canoes sailing rapidly, may cause them to sink if assistance be not at hand.

About three miles above the fort a long and narrow point of land, rather high, runs near half a mile into the river from the south side: it is called Tongue Point, and in boisterous weather is very difficult to double. On quitting Astoria it blew pretty fresh, and we took in a good deal of water in doubling this point. We stopped for the night

about six miles above Tongue Point, on the south side, close to an old uninhabited village, but having no lack of animated beings of another description ; I mean fleas, with which the place was completely alive ; and we had not been on shore five minutes when we were obliged to strip, get a change of clothes, and drown the invaders of our late suit by dipping them in the river.* We had to pitch our tents on the sandy beach to avoid their attacks ; but this was only “out of the frying-pan,” &c. ; for about midnight the tide came on us unawares ; and the first intimation we received of our danger was the noise of the water beating against the canoes and baggage ; and when the alarm was given, it was nearly up to our knees on the beach. It was a spring tide, on which the men did not calculate, and therefore kept no watch ; added to which, every man was nearly drunk on quitting the fort.

We had immediately to set about getting the goods on the grass, and dressing ourselves. On examination the following morning, we found se-

* During the warm months of summer it is difficult to select a spot for an encampment free from these annoying insects.

veral bales were wet, which we were obliged to open for the purpose of drying. This detained us late, and we only made about ten miles on the second day, and landed on a small bottom, free from the tide, but somewhat infested by fleas and musquitoes. On the 1st of July it blew rather stiffly from the south-east, which retarded our progress considerably, and we did not make more than fifteen miles; but on the 2nd we had a good run, and encamped on a fine meadow island, where we hoped to spend a pleasant night, free from fleas. Our hopes were partly realised: none of the little agile back-biters attacked us; but their absence was more than amply compensated by myriads of musquitoes, from which we suffered the most painful torments all night; the face, ears, neck, and hands, were peculiar objects of their affection; and what between them and their brethren of the blanket, we scarcely had an unpunctured spot in our bodies. I was particularly honoured with their preference; and in the morning my eyes were completely closed up from the effects of their infernal stings.

We arrived on the evening of the 4th at the foot

of the first rapids, where we encamped. The Indians so far had been always friendly, and were in the habit of occasionally trading at Astoria; but as the tribe who resides at the rapids had previously manifested hostile feelings, it was deemed necessary to prepare for action. Each man was provided with a musket, and forty rounds of ball-cartridge, with pouch, belts, &c.; and over his clothes he wore leathern armour: this was a kind of shirt made out of the skin of the elk, which reached from the neck to the knees. It was perfectly arrow-proof; and at eighty or ninety yards impenetrable by a musket bullet. Besides the muskets, numbers had daggers, short swords, and pistols; and, when armed *cap-d-pié*, we presented a formidable appearance.

A council of war was then called, in which it was arranged that five officers should remain at each end of the portage, and the remainder, with twenty-five men, be stationed at short distances from each other. Its length was between three and four miles, and the path was narrow and dangerous; one part greatly obstructed by slippery rocks; and another ran through a thick wood,

from which a skilful enemy could have attacked us with advantage. We only made one half of the portage the first day, and encamped near an old village ; with the river in front ; a deep wood in the rear ; at one end a natural intrenchment of rocks ; and at the other a barrier formed by the canoes and *bateaux*. The whole brigade was divided into three watches, with five officers to each.

In the course of the day, in the most gloomy part of the wood, we passed a cemetery, materially different from those belonging to the lower tribes. There were nine shallow excavations, closely covered with pine and cedar boards, and the top boards sloping to let off the rain. Each place was about seven feet square, and between five and six feet in height. They contained numbers of dead bodies ; some in a state of greater or less decomposition, and a few quite fresh : they were all carefully enveloped in mats and skins. Several poles were attached to these burial places, on which were suspended robes, pieces of cloth, kettles, bags of trinkets, baskets of roots, wooden bowls, and several orna-

ments; all of which the survivors believed their departed friends would require in the next world. Their veneration is so great for these offerings, that it is deemed sacrilege to pilfer one of them; and although these Indians are not remarkable for scrupulous honesty, I believe no temptation would induce them to touch these articles. Several of the boards are carved and painted with rude representations of men, bears, wolves, and animals unknown. Some in green, others in white and red, and all most hideously unlike nature.

About midnight we were thrown into a state of frightful confusion by the report of a gun, and the cries of Mr. Pillet, one of the clerks, that he was shot. Every one instantly seized his arms, and inquired on which side was the enemy; but our apprehensions were quickly appeased, on learning it was merely an accident. One of the gentlemen, in examining the musket of a Sandwich islander, to see if it was primed, handed it to him at full cock; and just as the islander had taken it, the piece went off, and the contents lodged in the calf of poor Pillet's leg, who naturally enough exclaimed he was shot. This was, however, in our

present circumstances, a disagreeable event, as it rendered Mr. Pillet not only incapable of fighting, but required three or four men to carry him in a litter over the various portages. The wound was dressed with friar's balsam and lint ; the ball extracted the next day ; and in about a month afterwards he was able to walk.

We commenced proceedings at four o'clock on the morning of the 6th, and finished the portage about two in the afternoon. During our progress the Indians occasionally hovered about the loaded men, and made two or three trifling essays to pilfer them ; but the excellent precautions we had adopted completely kept them in check, and deterred them from attempting any thing like forcible robbery. At the upper end of the portage, and while we were reloading the canoes, a number of the natives, several of whom were armed, assembled about us : they conducted themselves peaceably ; but our numbers and warlike arrangements enforced respect. The dress of the men does not differ materially from that of the Lower Indians ; but they are incontestably more filthy and ugly. Their teeth are almost worn away.

The greater number have very sore eyes : several have only one ; and we observed a few old men and women quite blind. The men are generally naked ; and the women merely wear a leathern belt, with a narrow piece of the same material joined to the front, which very imperfectly answers the purposes intended. Some wear leathern robes over the breast and shoulders ; but others allow these parts to remain naked. We observed no one who appeared to assume the authority of a chief. Each seemed quite independent of the other, and complete master in his own house and family. Their unfeeling brutality to the few old blind people I have mentioned was really shocking ; and I may safely say, a more unamiable race of democrats are not to be found in that country of republics. We distributed a quantity of tobacco among them, with which they appeared satisfied ; after which we embarked, and proceeded on. The upper part of this chain of rapids is a perpendicular fall of nearly sixteen feet ; after which it continues down nearly one uninterrupted rapid for three miles and a half. The river here is compressed by the bold shore on each side to

about two hundred yards or less in breadth. The channel is crowded with large rocks, over which the water rushes with incredible velocity, and with a dreadful noise. Above the portage the river widens to about half a mile, and is studded for some distance with several rocky and partially wooded islands. We encamped about five miles from the portage, in a pretty little creek on the north side. The pine declines considerably in size above the rapids, and is more equally mixed with other trees; among which, on the left shore, from the portage up to our encampment, the hazel is predominant. We purchased some salmon on our way up, by which we were enabled to husband our own provisions with more economy. I omitted to mention that below the rapids we also got a quantity of excellent roots, called by the Indians *wappittoo*: in size they resemble a small potato, for which it is a good substitute when roasted or boiled; it has a very slight tinge of bitterness, but not unpleasantly so; and is highly esteemed by the natives, who collect vast quantities of it for their own use and for barter: none of it grows above the rapids. On the evening of the 8th we

reached the foot of the narrows, or, as the Canadians call them, *les dalles*. The river from the first rapids to the narrows is broad, deep, and rapid, with several sunken rocks, scattered here and there, which often injure the canoes. The Canadians, who are very fertile in baptizing remarkable places, called an island near our encampment of the 6th *Gibraltar*, from the rocky steepness of its shore: and about half way between the first rapids and narrows a bold promontory of high black rock stretches a considerable distance into the river, which, from the difficulty we experienced in doubling it, received the name of *Cape Horn*. The current here is very strong and full of whirlpools; so that except in calm weather, or with a fair wind, it is rather a dangerous undertaking to "double the Cape." The islands in the distance are crowded with great numbers of seals, which afforded excellent sport to our marksmen. As we approached the narrows the shores on each side were less covered with wood, and immediately close to them it had entirely disappeared. The land on the north side was bold and rocky, and about our encampment

rather low, mixed with rocks, a sandy soil, and totally devoid of vegetation, except loose straggling bushes some distance inland. The Columbia, at the narrows, for upwards of three miles is compressed into a narrow channel, not exceeding sixty or seventy yards wide ; the whole of which is a succession of boiling whirlpools. Above this channel, for four or five miles, the river is one deep rapid, at the upper end of which a large mass of high black rock stretches across from the north side, and nearly joins a similar mass on the south : they are divided by a strait not exceeding fifty yards wide ; and through this narrow channel, for upwards of half a mile, the immense waters of the Columbia are one mass of foam, and force their headlong course with a frightful impetuosity, which cannot at any time be contemplated without producing a painful giddiness. We were obliged to carry all our lading from the lower to the upper narrows, nearly nine miles. The canoes were dragged up part of the space between the narrows. This laborious undertaking occupied two entire days, in consequence of the number of armed men we were obliged to keep as guards to protect those

who carried the goods. It was a little above this place where our party had been recently attacked, and we were therefore obliged to be doubly cautious. The chief and several of the Indians kept about us during the portage. We gave them some tobacco and trifling presents to cultivate their friendship, in return for which they brought us some salmon. They had the discrimination to see from our numbers, and the manner we were prepared to receive them, that an attack would be attended with rather doubtful success; and therefore feigned an appearance of friendship, which we affected to believe sincere. The propriety of "assuming a virtue if you have it not," however questionable in morals, must be often practised among Indians; for they are such thorough-bred hypocrites and liars, that we found it often necessary to repose apparent confidence in them, when we well knew they were exerting their utmost skill to impose on and deceive us. Even here, while the chief and some of his tribe were smoking with us at one of the resting places, a few of the gentlemen who were at the upper end of the portage, seeing no symptoms of danger, wandered

a short distance among the rocks to view the narrows, leaving part of the goods unguarded: this was instantly observed by two fellows who were lurking close to the place, and who availed themselves of the opportunity to attempt carrying off an entire bale; but finding it rather heavy, were about rifling its contents when two of the loaded men arrived, and gave the alarm. The robbers had the audacity to attack the men, one of whom they knocked down; when the officers, on seeing what occurred, returned back quickly, upon which the savages fled. A shot was fired at them by our best marksman, who was told merely to wing one, which he did with great skill, by breaking his left arm, at upwards of a hundred yards distance. The fellow gave a dreadful shout on receiving the ball, but still continued his flight with his comrade, until we lost sight of them. This piece of severity was deemed necessary, to prevent repetitions of similar aggressions. The chief, in strong terms, declared his ignorance of any previous intention on the part of these fellows to commit robbery, which we appeared not to doubt; at the same time giving him to understand, that in

case any farther attacks were made, our balls would be directed to a more mortal part.

On the morning of the 11th we embarked, and proceeded a few miles with great labour, by dragging the canoes against the current, which is very strong between the upper narrows and the falls. The passengers all walked, and at some ugly rocky points part of the lading had to be taken out: this consumed the greater portion of the day; and we encamped that evening on the south side near the foot of the falls. Here several Indians visited us; some armed, and on horseback, others unarmed, and on foot. In language, dress, and manners, they appeared to belong to distinct nations. The horsemen were clean, wore handsome leathern shirts and leggings, and had a bold daring manner, which we did not observe with any of the tribes from the sea upwards. The more humble pedestrians were the natives of the place: they were nearly naked, and rather dirty in their persons, and professed to be friendly: but from several attempts they made at pilfering, we entertained strong doubts of their sincerity; and were obliged to order them to remove some

distance from the camp. They seemed to regard the mounted Indians with a suspicious degree of apprehension, for which we were for some time at a loss to account; but which we subsequently learned was caused by their having been lately at war, in which they were vanquished, and several of their tribe killed by the equestrians. The latter remained on horseback most part of the time, making observations on our party, by which they apparently intended to regulate their future proceedings: they made no show of friendship, were rather cold and distant in their manners, and appeared to be a reconnoitring party sent out by the main body to watch our progress. As a precautionary measure, we judged it expedient to show them we were fully prepared for action, and accordingly assembled all the men in the evening, each encased in his coat of mail, and armed with a musket and bayonet. They remained looking at us very attentively, while our officers proceeded to examine each man's firelock with all due military solemnity: one half of the men were then ordered to form a barrier with the canoes on our rear and flanks, which, with the river in front,

effectually served to prevent a surprise during the night. The whole brigade was equally divided ; and one half of the men having retired to rest, the remainder were posted as sentinels about the camp. Owing to the extreme heat, the Sandwich islanders had thrown off their jackets and shirts during the day, and their swarthy bodies, decorated with buff belts, seemed to excite the particular attention of the Indians, who repeatedly pointed towards them, and then spoke to each other with considerable animation. Having completed our arrangements for the night, we offered them some tobacco, which they accepted, and then left us. It is necessary to observe that in the course of the day a calumet was presented to some of the horsemen, which they refused ; from which circumstance, joined to their general deportment, we were led to believe their visit was not of a pacific nature. We passed the night without any interruption to our repose, and commenced the portage of the falls early on the morning of the 12th ; but as the ground over which the men were obliged to carry the baggage was covered with a deep bed of dry loose sand, which

fatigued them extremely, they did not finish their laborious duty before night. We encamped late at the upper end of the falls, near a village of the Eneeshurs, from whom we purchased some salmon. A few of the horsemen occasionally reconnoitred us during the day; but as our men made short resting-places, or pauses in the portage, by which the entire party were always in view of each other, the natives made no hostile attempt; and on observing the manner we had fortified our camp, and placed our sentinels for the night, they departed. The principal fall does not exceed fifteen feet in height; but at low water it is much higher. The descent of the Columbia from above this fall to the end of the lower narrows exceeds seventy feet, and throughout the whole distance (about ten miles) the river is strewn with immense masses of hard black rock, mostly honey-combed, and worn into a variety of fantastic shapes by the perpetual friction of the water in its fearful course downwards. The appearance of the country here is high, rocky, barren, and without timber of any kind. We found this a sensible inconvenience; for we were obliged to purchase

some drift wood from the Indians for the purposes of cooking.

On quitting this place the following morning, a number of natives collected about us, among whom we distributed a quantity of tobacco. The river for some distance above this place is deep and rapid, and the banks steep and rocky. The canoes were dragged up several miles, and some of them damaged by the rocks. About four or five miles above the fall a high rocky island three miles in length lies in the centre of the river, on which the Indians were employed drying salmon, great quantities of which were cured and piled under broad boards in stacks. We encamped on the north side opposite the island, and were visited by some Indians, from whom we purchased salmon: they appeared friendly, and belonged to the Eneeshur tribe at the falls.

Here, and for several hundred miles farther upwards, the country assumes a new aspect: it is free from any rising grounds, or timber, and on each side nothing is to be seen but immense plains stretching a great distance to the north and south: the soil is dry and sandy, and covered with a loose

parched grass, growing in tufts. The natives reside solely on the northern side : they have plenty of horses, and are generally friendly. Here also rattlesnakes are first seen, and are found for four or five hundred miles farther on. Between this place and Lewis River the Columbia is interrupted by several rapids ; some of which are trifling, others dangerous ; but there are long intervals of smooth current which occasionally allowed us to hoist small sails, and thereby diminished the laborious duty of the canoe-men in paddling.

CHAPTER VII.

Party commence eating horses—Remarkable escape from a rattlesnake—Kill numbers of them—Arrive among the Wallah Wallah tribe—Description of the country—The Pierced-nose Indians—Author's party proceeds up Lewis River—Purchase horses for land-travelling—Prickly pears—Awkward accident—Leave the canoes, and journey inland.

THE day after quitting the encampment at the end of the rocky island we stopped about one o'clock at a village, where we purchased five horses. The value of the goods we paid for each in England would not exceed five shillings. As these horses were intended for the kettle, they were doomed to instant destruction. Our comparatively recent separation from the land of "bread and butter" caused the idea of feeding on so useful and noble an animal to be at first

highly repugnant to our feelings ; but example, and above all, necessity, soon conquered these little qualms of civilisation ; and in a few days we almost brought ourselves to believe that the animal on which we fed once carried horns, was divided in the hoof, and chewed the cud. A curious incident occurred at this spot to one of our men named La Course, which was nearly proving fatal. This man had stretched himself on the ground, after the fatigue of the day, with his head resting on a small package of goods, and quickly fell asleep. While in this situation I passed him, and was almost petrified at seeing a large rattlesnake moving from his side to his left breast. My first impulse was to alarm La Course ; but an old Canadian whom I had beckoned to the spot requested me to make no noise, alleging it would merely cross the body, and go away. He was mistaken ; for on reaching the man's left shoulder, the serpent deliberately coiled itself, but did not appear to meditate an attack. Having made signs to several others, who joined us, it was determined that two men should advance a little in front, to divert the attention of the snake, while

one should approach La Course behind, and with a long stick endeavour to remove it from his body. The snake on observing the men advance in front, instantly raised its head, darted out its forked tongue, and shook its rattles ; all indications of anger. Every one was now in a state of feverish agitation as to the fate of poor La Course, who still lay slumbering, unconscious of his danger ; when the man behind, who had procured a stick seven feet in length, suddenly placed one end of it under the coiled reptile, and succeeded in pitching it upwards of ten feet from the man's body. A shout of joy was the first intimation La Course received of his wonderful escape, while in the mean time the man with the stick pursued the snake, which he killed. It was three feet six inches long ; and eleven years old, which I need not inform my readers we easily ascertained by the number of rattles. A general search was then commenced about the encampment, and under several rocks we found upwards of fifty of them, all of which we destroyed. There is no danger attending their destruction, provided a person has a long pliant stick, and does not approach

them nearer than their length, for they cannot spring beyond it, and seldom act on the offensive except closely pursued. They have a strong repugnance to the smell of tobacco, in consequence of which we opened a bale of it, and strewed a quantity of loose leaves about the tents, by which means we avoided their visits during the night. We had however nearly as bad visitors—the musquitoes, which from the falls upwards annoyed us dreadfully. We were obliged to make a slight fire of rotten wood in the *cul-de-sac* of our tents, which merely caused a smoke without flame, and which effectually drove them away: but the remedy was as bad as the disease, as we were nearly blinded and suffocated by the smoke.

Owing to the many accidents which befell our canoes in the rapids, and the time consequently employed in repairing them, and drying damaged goods, our progress was greatly retarded, and we did not reach the Wallah Wallah river until the 28th. During this period we generally encamped on the northern banks of the river; purchased a number of horses for eating; and were several times without wood for cooking them. The In-

dians behaved in the most peaceable manner, and freely bartered with us such other provisions as they could spare. A few miles below the Wallah Wallah the land on the south side rises into rocky cliffs, near two hundred feet high, which extend some distance inland. There is a long and very dangerous rapid at their base, which, by way of pre-eminence, the Canadians call the *Grande Rapide*. We landed on the south side, up which the canoes were dragged with great difficulty. We observed immense numbers of rattlesnakes here, basking in the sun, and under the rocks, several of which we killed. Half a dozen of us fired together at a batch lying under one rock, and killed or wounded thirty-seven! Our guns were charged with goose shot. There was scarcely a stone in this place which was not covered with them. All the time we walked we were constantly on the *qui vive*; and, I need not say, picked our steps very cautiously. From the friendly character of the natives we had thrown by our armour for some days, which relieved us greatly; the heat, while we were obliged to wear it, being almost insupportable. Above this rocky eminence

the country opened again into an extended plain. The river here, and for several miles lower down, is occasionally bordered with straggling clusters of willow, cotton wood, stunted red cedar, and sumach, with quantities of sarsaparilla. There is also abundance of furze bushes and wormwood, through which we observed several hares running, some of which we killed.

In the evening we encamped at the entrance of the Wallah Wallah river: a number of that tribe visited us, and remained for some time smoking. We informed Tamtappam, their chief, that we wanted good horses fit to carry luggage, and others to eat, and requested he would procure for us as many as he could the following day: this he promised to do, and departed.

On the 29th we purchased twenty horses for Mr. Robert Stuart's party; which being deemed sufficient for them, he, with Messrs. Crooks and M'Lelland, and eight men, left us the next morning, under a salute of three cheers, to pursue their dangerous journey across the mountains, and thence by the Missouri to St. Louis. The Wallah Wallahs were decidedly the most friendly tribe

we had seen on the river : they had an air of open unsuspecting confidence in their manner that at once banished suspicion, and insured our friendship. There was a degree of natural politeness, too, evinced by them on entering their lodges, which we did not see practised by any others. We visited several families in the village ; and the moment we entered, the best place was selected for us, and a clean mat spread to sit on ; while the inmates, particularly the women and the children, remained at a respectful distance, without manifesting any of the obtrusive curiosity about our arms or clothing by which we were so much annoyed amongst the lower tribes. The females, also, were distinguished by a degree of attentive kindness, totally removed from the disgusting familiarity of the kilted ladies below the rapids, and equally free from an affectation of prudery : prostitution is unknown among them ; and I believe no inducement would tempt them to commit a breach of chastity.

The Wallah Wallah is a bold, rapid stream, about fifty-five yards wide, and upwards of six feet deep : the water is clear, and rolls over a bed of

sand and gravel. On the 31st we moved up to the north side of the mouth of Lewis River, which is about fourteen miles above the Wallah Wallah : its course is nearly due west, and at its junction with the Columbia it is upwards of six hundred yards wide. The current is very rapid : its waters deep, whitish, and slightly tepid, in which respect it forms a marked contrast to the Columbia, the waters of which are quite clear and cool : the latter river at this place is upwards of one thousand yards wide, and the current descends at an even rate of about four miles an hour. A little below the junction however it widens from a mile to a mile and a half, and has several islands, two of which are low and sandy, and are nearly three miles in length. Below these islands a range of high hills are seen on each side of the river, running nearly from S. W. to N. E., and uncovered by any timber : but at an immense distance, in a south-easterly direction, a chain of high craggy mountains are visible, from which it is supposed the Wallah Wallah takes its rise. From their colour the Canadians called this chain *Les Montagnes Bleues*. The banks of both rivers at their

junction are low, with a gentle rise on each side. The plains are covered with immense quantities of prickly pear, which was a source of great annoyance. Above Lewis River the Columbia runs in a northerly direction : below it, in a westerly. We remained here three days purchasing horses for our journey inland. Mr. David Stuart and a party proceeded in their canoes up the Columbia to the trading establishment which he had formed at Oakinagan river, which falls into the Columbia, from the northward, about two hundred and eighty miles above this place. Mr. Donald M'Kenzie and his party proceeded up Lewis River in order to establish a trading post on the upper parts of it, or in the country of the Snake Indians; his choice to be regulated according to the appearances of beaver in either place. The natives of this district are called the Pierced-nose Indians; but as French is the language in general use among traders in this country, owing to most part of their working men being Canadians, we commonly called them *Les Nez Percés*. They do not differ much from the Wallah Wallahs in their dress or language, but are not so friendly, and

demand higher prices for their horses. Their habitations are covered with large mats, fixed on poles : some are square, others oblong, and some conical : they are of various sizes, from twenty to seventy feet long, and from ten to fifteen feet broad. There are no interior divisions, and an opening in the top serves the double purpose of a window and chimney. These dwellings are pretty free from vermin, and are easily changed when occasion requires. The women wear leathern robes, which cover the shoulders, part of the arms, the breasts, and reach down to their legs. The men have robes nearly similar, but not so long, with leggings which reach up half the thigh, and are fastened to a belt round the waist by leathern thongs. They are clean, active, and smart-looking, good hunters, and excellent horsemen. They enjoy good health, and, with the exception of a few sore eyes, did not appear to have any disorder. They are fond of their children, and attentive to the wants of their old people. Their saddles are made of dressed deer-skin stuffed with hair : the stirrups are wooden, with the bottom broad and flat, and covered over with raw skin, which

when dry becomes hard, and lasts a long time. The bridles are merely ropes made out of the hair of the horses' tails, and are tied round their under jaw. The women ride like the men : their saddles are high in front and rear, and formed something like the humps on a camel's back ; and they must bring their horses to a rock or old tree to enable them to mount. The men are hard and unfeeling riders : the rope bridles cut the corners of the poor horses' mouths ; and the saddles generally leave their backs quite raw : yet in this state they ride them for several days successively without the least pity for the tortured animals. We got plenty of salmon while we remained here, and some lamprey eels, the latter of which were oily and very strong. Having purchased twenty-five horses, we took our departure on the 3rd of August, and proceeded up Lewis River ; some on land with the horses, but the greater part still in the canoes. The water was very high, and rapid, and in many places the banks steep and shelving, which made the process of dragging up the canoes very difficult. Poling was quite impossible ; for on the off, or outer side, the men could not find

bottom with their poles. I remained on shore part of the time with the horses. In some places the path wound along the almost perpendicular declivities of high hills on the banks of the river, and was barely wide enough for one horse at a time. Yet along these dangerous roads the Indians galloped with the utmost composure; while one false step would have hurled them down a precipice of three hundred feet into the torrent below. Even walking along these dangerous declivities, leading my horse, I experienced an indescribable sensation of dread on looking down the frightful abyss.

On the 7th we reached a small stream which falls into Lewis River from the north: the mouth is wide, and forms a kind of semicircular bay, but suddenly narrows to about ten or twelve yards. A village of about forty mat-covered tents was situated at its junction with the main river. The inhabitants were busily employed in catching and drying salmon for their winter and spring stock; and as it was here we intended to leave the canoes and proceed to our destination by land, we encamped on the west side of the little bay, and

immediately commenced a trade with the natives for horses. This place is not more than fifty miles from the Columbia; but owing to the rapidity of the current, and the many rapids with which it was interrupted, our progress was slow. The business of collecting and catching the horses, which generally occupied until eleven or twelve o'clock each day, also contributed to cause this delay. With the exception of small willow and cotton wood, there are no trees from the Columbia upwards. The ground is covered with loose grass, and abounds in great quantities of the prickly pear, the thorns of which are remarkably sharp, and strong enough to penetrate the leather of the thickest moccasins.

On the third day, while riding a short distance ahead of the men, my horse happened to stand on a bunch of the prickly pears, which pained him so much that he commenced plunging and kicking, and ultimately threw me into a cluster of them. My face, neck, and body, were severely pierced; and every effort to rise only increased the painfulness of my situation, for wherever I placed my hands to assist in raising my body they came

in contact with the same tormenting thorns. In fact I could not move an inch ; and to add to my disaster, I observed three rattlesnakes within a few feet of my head. The men who were in the rear driving the horses, hearing my cries, quickly came to my assistance, and with considerable difficulty disentangled me from my painful situation : the snakes in the mean time had disappeared. I immediately hailed the canoes, and resumed my old place on board, firmly resolved never again to ride while a prickly pear was visible.

The inhabitants of this fishing village were part of the Pierced-nose Indians. We remained here seven days, endeavouring to complete our number of horses, which we at length effected. The natives were hard to deal with, and we had to raise our prices. Several trifling articles were stolen from us, which the chief promised to recover ; but he either made no attempt, or the means he used were ineffectual. He apologised for his want of success by saying that the thieves belonged to another tribe higher up the river, and that they had departed with the stolen property. In their dress, language, and dwellings, these people dif-

fered little from those at the mouth of Lewis River. On the evening of the 14th we laid up our *bateaux* and canoes in a snug spot covered with willow and loose shrubs, and recommended them to the care of the chief, who promised that they should be carefully preserved until our return the following spring. We made him a present of a fathom of blue cloth, an axe, and a knife: to his wife we gave a few strings of white and blue beads, and three dozen of hawk-bells for her *chemise de cuir*; and among the remainder we distributed a few heads of leaf-tobacco.

We purchased altogether fifty horses to carry the goods and baggage; and from the difficulty we experienced in procuring that number, we were not able to obtain enough for our own use. M'Lennan and I, however, succeeded in purchasing one for our joint use; and Farnham and Pillet got another. The men also obtained a few, which occasionally served to relieve them in the progress of their journey. Our destination was fixed for the Spokane tribe of Indians, whose lands lay about one hundred and fifty miles from Lewis River in a north-east direction, and among whom

we were given to understand the North-west Company had already established a trading post from the east side of the Rocky Mountains. We also engaged an Indian guide to conduct us to the Spokane lands.

On the 15th of August, at five A. M., we took our departure from Lewis River. Our party consisted of one proprietor, four clerks, twenty-one Canadians, and six Sandwich islanders, with the Indian guide. We proceeded nearly due north along the banks of the small river for some miles through an open plain, which was bounded by a range of steep rugged hills, running from the westward, over which we had to cross. In some places the path led over steep and slippery rocks, and was so narrow, that the horses which were loaded with large bales could not pass without running the risk of falling down the craggy precipices; and the men were obliged to unload them and place the bales singly on the top of the pack-saddles. After we had passed as we imagined the most dangerous part of the pathway, and had commenced our descent into the plain, one of the horses missed his footing, and rolled down a de-

clivity of two hundred feet loaded with two cases of axes: the cases were broken, and their contents scattered about the rocks; but, with the exception of his sides, the skin of which was scraped off, the horse received no material injury. We arrived on the north side of these hills about eleven o'clock, when we stopped to breakfast on the banks of the river, which here turns to the eastward. We resumed our journey at two o'clock, and suffered severely during the day from the intense heat, and the want of water. The country was a continued plain, with sandy and rocky bottom, mixed with loose tufts of grass. About seven in the evening we reached a cool stream, on the banks of which were a profusion of wild cherries, currants, and blackberries, which afforded us an unexpected and welcome treat. We encamped here for the night; and did not hobble the horses,* as we were certain the luxurious herbage of the *prairie* would prevent them from wandering.

* When we were apprehensive that the horses might wander from an encampment, their two fore legs were tied together. This we called *hobbling*.

At four A. M. on the 16th we set off from our encampment, still pursuing a northerly course. The country still champaign, and the grass long and coarse, but loosely imbedded in a sandy soil. About eight we came to a fine spring, at which we breakfasted, as our guide told us we should not find water beyond it for a great distance. After waiting here a few hours, we reloaded, and pursued our journey in the same direction. During the remainder of the day no "green spot bloomed on the desert" around us. The country was completely denuded of wood; and as far as the eye extended, nothing was visible but immense plains covered with parched brown grass, swarming with rattlesnakes. The horses suffered dreadfully, as well as their masters, from heat and thirst. Two fine pointers belonging to Mr. Clarke were so exhausted that we were compelled to leave them behind, and never saw them afterwards. Several of the horses being on the point of giving up, and numbers of the men scarcely able to walk, Mr. Clarke sharply questioned the guide as to his knowledge of the country, and the probable time we might expect to fall in with water: the latter

saw his doubts, and calmly replied, pointing to the sun, that when it should have gained a certain distance we might expect relief. We knew half an hour would not elapse before it should attain the desired point, and every watch was out to judge of the Indian's accuracy. He was right; and about half-past five P. M. we reached a small stream, by the side of which we encamped for the night. The guide gave us to understand we should find plenty of water the following day.

CHAPTER VIII.

Author loses the party—Curious adventures, and surprising escapes from serpents and wild beasts during fourteen days in a wilderness—Meets with Indians, by whom he is hospitably received, and conducted to his friends.

ON the 17th of August we left our encampment a little after four A. M. During the forenoon the sun was intensely hot. Occasional bright green patches, intermixed with wild flowers, and gently rising eminences, partially covered with clumps of small trees, gave an agreeable variety to the face of the country ; which we enjoyed the more, from the scorched and sterile uniformity of the plains through which we had passed on the two preceding days. We got no water, however, until twelve o'clock, when we arrived in a small valley of the most delightful verdure, through which ran

a clear stream from the northward, over a pebbly bottom. The horses were immediately turned loose to regale themselves in the rich pasture ; and as it was full of red and white clover, orders were given not to catch them until two o'clock, by which time we thought they would be sufficiently refreshed for the evening's journey.

After walking and riding eight hours, I need not say we made a hearty breakfast ; after which I wandered some distance along the banks of the rivulet in search of cherries, and came to a sweet little arbour formed by sumach and cherry trees. I pulled a quantity of the fruit, and sat down in the retreat to enjoy its refreshing coolness. It was a charming spot, and on the opposite bank was a delightful wilderness of crimson haw, honeysuckles, wild roses, and currants : its resemblance to a friend's summer-house in which I had spent many happy days brought back home with all its endearing recollections ; and my scattered thoughts were successively occupied with the past, the present, and the future. In this state I fell into a kind of pleasing, soothing reverie, which, joined to the morning's fatigue, gradually sealed my eye-

lids ; and unconscious of my situation, I resigned myself to the influence of the drowsy god. But imagine my feelings when I awoke in the evening, I think it was about five o'clock, from the declining appearance of the sun ! All was calm and silent as the grave. I hastened to the spot where we had breakfasted : it was vacant. I ran to the place where the men had made their fire : all, all were gone, and not a vestige of man or horse appeared in the valley. My senses almost failed me. I called out, in vain, in every direction, until I became hoarse ; and I could no longer conceal from myself the dreadful truth that I was alone in a wild, uninhabited country, without horse or arms, and destitute of covering.

Having now no resource but to ascertain the direction which the party had taken, I set about examining the ground, and at the north-east point of the valley discovered the tracks of horses' feet, which I followed for some time, and which led to a chain of small hills with a rocky, gravelly bottom, on which the hoofs made no impression. Having thus lost the tracks, I ascended the highest of the hills, from which I had an extended view of many

miles around; but saw no sign of the party, or the least indication of human habitations. The evening was now closing fast, and with the approach of night a heavy dew commenced falling. The whole of my clothes consisted merely of a gingham shirt; nankeen trowsers, and a pair of light leather moccasins, much worn. About an hour before breakfast, in consequence of the heat, I had taken off my coat and placed it on one of the loaded horses, intending to put it on towards the cool of the evening; and one of the men had charge of my fowling-piece. I was even without my hat; for in the agitated state of my mind on awaking I had left it behind, and had advanced too far to think of returning for it. At some distance on my left I observed a field of high strong grass, to which I proceeded, and after pulling enough to place under and over me, I recommended myself to the Almighty, and fell asleep. During the night confused dreams of warm houses, feather beds, poisoned arrows, prickly pears, and rattlesnakes, haunted my disturbed imagination.

On the 18th I arose with the sun, quite wet

and chilly, the heavy dew having completely saturated my flimsy covering, and proceeded in an easterly direction, nearly parallel with the chain of hills. In the course of the day I passed several small lakes full of wild fowl. The general appearance of the country was flat, the soil light and gravelly, and covered with the same loose grass already mentioned; great quantities of it had been recently burned by the Indians in hunting the deer, the stubble of which annoyed my feet very much. I had turned into a northerly course, where, late in the evening, I observed about a mile distant two horsemen galloping in an easterly direction. From their dresses I knew they belonged to our party. I instantly ran to a hillock, and called out in a voice to which hunger had imparted a supernatural shrillness; but they galloped on. I then took off my shirt, which I waved in a conspicuous manner over my head, accompanied by the most frantic cries; still they continued on. I ran towards the direction they were galloping, despair adding wings to my flight. Rocks, stubble, and brushwood were passed with the speed of a hunted antelope; but to no pur-

pose: for on arriving at the place where I imagined a pathway would have brought me into their track, I was completely at fault. It was now nearly dark. I had eaten nothing since the noon of the preceding day; and, faint with hunger and fatigue, threw myself on the grass, when I heard a small rustling noise behind me. I turned round, and, with horror, beheld a large rattlesnake cooling himself in the evening shade. I instantly retreated, on observing which he coiled himself. Having obtained a large stone, I advanced slowly on him, and taking a proper aim, dashed it with all my force on the reptile's head, which I buried in the ground beneath the stone.

The late race had completely worn out the thin soles of my moccasins, and my feet in consequence became much swollen. As night advanced, I was obliged to look out for a place to sleep, and after some time, selected nearly as good a bed as the one I had the first night. My exertions in pulling the long coarse grass nearly rendered my hands useless by severely cutting all the joints of the fingers.

I rose before the sun on the morning of the

19th, and pursued an easterly course all the day. I at first felt very hungry, but after walking a few miles, and taking a drink of water, I got a little refreshed. The general appearance of the country was still flat, with burned grass, and sandy soil, which blistered my feet. The scorching influence of the sun obliged me to stop for some hours in the day; during which I made several ineffectual attempts to construct a covering for my head. At times I thought my brain was on fire from the dreadful effects of the heat. I got no fruit those two days, and towards evening felt very weak from the want of nourishment, having been forty-eight hours without food; and to make my situation more annoying, I slept that evening on the banks of a pretty lake, the inhabitants of which would have done honour to a royal table. With what an evil eye and a murderous heart did I regard the stately goose and the plump waddling duck as they sported on the water, unconscious of my presence! Even with a pocket pistol I could have done execution among them. The state of my fingers prevented me from obtaining the covering of grass which I had the two preceding nights;

and on this evening I had no shelter whatever to protect me from the heavy dew.

On the following day, the 20th, my course was nearly north-east, and lay through a country more diversified by wood and water. I saw plenty of wild geese, ducks, cranes, curlews and sparrows, also some hawks and cormorants, and at a distance about fifteen or twenty small deer. The wood consisted of pine, birch, cedar, wild cherries, hawthorn, sweet-willow, honeysuckle and sumach. The rattlesnakes were very numerous this day, with horned lizards, and grasshoppers : the latter kept me in a constant state of feverish alarm from the similarity of the noise made by their wings to the sound of the rattles of the snake when preparing to dart on its prey. I suffered severely during the day from hunger, and was obliged to chew grass occasionally, which allayed it a little. Late in the evening I arrived at a lake upwards of two miles long, and a mile broad, the shores of which were high, and well wooded with large pine, spruce, and birch. It was fed by two rivulets, from the north, and north-east, in which I observed a quantity of small fish ; but had no

means of catching any, or I should have made a Sandwich-island meal. There was however an abundant supply of wild cherries, on which I made a hearty supper. I slept on the bank of the nearest stream, just where it entered the lake ; but during the night the howling of wolves and growling of bears broke in terribly on my slumbers, and “balmy sleep” was almost banished from my eyelids. On rising the next morning, the 21st, I observed on the opposite bank at the mouth of the river, the entrance of a large and apparently deep cavern, from which I judged some of the preceding night’s music had issued. I now determined to make short journies for two or three days in different directions, in the hope of falling on some fresh horse tracks ; and, in the event of being unsuccessful, to return each night to the lake, where I was at least certain of procuring cherries and water sufficient to sustain nature. In pursuance of this resolution I set out early in a southerly direction from the head of the lake, through a wild barren country, without any water, or vegetation, save loose tufts of grass like those already described. I had armed myself

with a long stick, with which during the day I killed several rattlesnakes. Having discovered no fresh tracks, I returned late in the evening hungry and thirsty, and took possession of my berth of the preceding night. I collected a heap of stones from the water side ; and just as I was lying down observed a wolf emerge from the opposite cavern, and thinking it safer to act on the offensive, lest he should imagine I was afraid, I threw some stones at him, one of which struck him on the leg : he retired yelling into his den ; and after waiting some time in fearful suspense to see if he would re-appear, I threw myself on the ground, and fell asleep ; but, like the night before, it was broken by the same unsocial noise, and for upwards of two hours I sat up waiting in anxious expectation the return of day-light. The vapours from the lake, joined to the heavy dew, had penetrated my frail covering of gingham ; but as the sun rose, I took it off, and stretched it on a rock, where it quickly dried. My excursion to the southward having proved abortive, I now resolved to try the east, and after eating my simple breakfast, proceeded in that direction ; and on crossing

the two small streams, had to penetrate a country full of "dark woods and rankling wilds," through which, owing to the immense quantities of underwood, my progress was slow. My feet too were uncovered, and, from the thorns of the various prickly plants, were much lacerated; in consequence of which, on returning to my late bivouack I was obliged to shorten the legs of my trowsers to procure bandages for them. The wolf did not make his appearance; but during the night I got occasional starts, from several of his brethren of the forest.

I anticipated the rising of the sun on the morning of the 23rd, and having been unsuccessful the two preceding days, determined to shape my course due north, and if possible not return again to the lake. During the day I skirted the wood, and fell on some old tracks, which revived my hopes a little. The country to the westward was chiefly plains covered with parched grass, and occasionally enlivened by savannahs of refreshing green, full of wild flowers and aromatic herbs, among which the bee and humming bird banqueted. I slept this evening by a small brook,

where I collected cherries and haws enough to make a hearty supper. I was obliged to make farther encroachments on the legs of my trowsers for fresh bandages for my feet. During the night I was serenaded by music which did not resemble "a concord of most sweet sounds;" in which the grumbling bass of the bears was at times drowned by the less pleasing sharps of the wolves. I partially covered my body this night with some pieces of pine bark which I stripped off a sapless tree.

The country through which I dragged my tired limbs on the 24th was thinly wooded. My course was north and north-east. I suffered much from want of water, having got during the day only two tepid and nauseous draughts from stagnant pools, which the long drought had nearly dried up. About sunset I arrived at a small stream, by the side of which I took up my quarters for the night. The dew fell heavily; but I was too much fatigued to go in quest of bark to cover me; and even had I been so inclined, the howling of the wolves would have deterred me from making the dangerous attempt. There must have been an extraordinary

nursery of these animals close to the spot; for between the weak, shrill cries of the young, and the more loud and dreadful howling of the old, I never expected to leave the place alive. I could not sleep. My only weapons of defence were a heap of stones and a stick. Ever and anon some more daring than others approached me. I presented the stick at them as if in the act of levelling a gun, upon which they retired, vented a few yells, advanced a little farther; and after surveying me for some time with their sharp, fiery eyes, to which the partial glimpses of the moon had imparted additional ferocity, retreated into the wood. In this state of fearful agitation I passed the night; but as day-light began to break, Nature asserted her supremacy, and I fell into a deep sleep, from which, to judge by the sun, I did not awake until between eight and nine o'clock on the morning of the 25th. My second bandages having been worn out, I was now obliged to bare my knees for fresh ones; and after tying them round my feet, and taking a copious draught from the adjoining brook for breakfast, I recommenced my joyless journey. My course was nearly north-north-east. I got no

water during the day, nor any of the wild cherries. Some slight traces of men's feet, and a few old horse tracks occasionally crossed my path: they proved that human beings sometimes at least visited that part of the country, and for a moment served to cheer my drooping spirits.

About dusk an immense-sized wolf rushed out of a thick copse a short distance from the pathway, planted himself directly before me, in a threatening position, and appeared determined to dispute my passage. He was not more than twenty feet from me. My situation was desperate, and as I knew that the least symptom of fear would be the signal for attack, I presented my stick, and shouted as loud as my weak voice would permit. He appeared somewhat startled, and retreated a few steps, still keeping his piercing eyes firmly fixed on me. I advanced a little, when he commenced howling in a most appalling manner; and supposing his intention was to collect a few of his comrades to assist in making an afternoon repast on my half-famished carcass, I redoubled my cries, until I had almost lost the power of utterance, at the same time calling out

various names, thinking I might make it appear I was not alone. An old and a young lynx ran close past me, but did not stop. The wolf remained about fifteen minutes in the same position; but whether my wild and fearful exclamations deterred any others from joining him, I cannot say. Finding at length my determination not to flinch, and that no assistance was likely to come, he retreated into the wood, and disappeared in the surrounding gloom.

The shades of night were now descending fast, when I came to a verdant spot surrounded by small trees, and full of rushes, which induced me to hope for water; but after searching for some time, I was still doomed to bitter disappointment. A shallow lake or pond had been there, which the long drought and heat had dried up. I then pulled a quantity of the rushes and spread them at the foot of a large stone, which I intended for my pillow; but as I was about throwing myself down, a rattlesnake coiled, with the head erect, and the forked tongue extended in a state of frightful oscillation, caught my eye immediately under the stone. I instantly retreated a short

distance ; but assuming fresh courage, soon despatched it with my stick. On examining the spot more minutely, a large cluster of them appeared under the stone, the whole of which I rooted out and destroyed. This was hardly accomplished when upwards of a dozen snakes of different descriptions, chiefly dark brown, blue, and green, made their appearance : they were much quicker in their movements than their rattle-tailed brethren ; and I could only kill a few of them.

This was a peculiarly soul-trying moment. I had tasted no fruit since the morning before, and after a painful day's march under a burning sun, could not procure a drop of water to allay my feverish thirst. I was surrounded by a murderous brood of serpents, and ferocious beasts of prey, and without even the consolation of knowing when such misery might have a probable termination. I might truly say with the royal psalmist that " the snares of death compassed me round about."

Having collected a fresh supply of rushes, which I spread some distance from the spot where I massacred the reptiles, I threw myself on them,

and was permitted through divine goodness to enjoy a night of undisturbed repose.

I arose on the morning of the 26th considerably refreshed ; and took a northerly course, occasionally diverging a little to the east. Several times during the day I was induced to leave the path by the appearance of rushes, which I imagined grew in the vicinity of lakes ; but on reaching them my faint hopes vanished : there was no water, and I in vain essayed to extract a little moisture from them. Prickly thorns and small sharp stones added greatly to the pain of my tortured feet, and obliged me to make farther encroachments on my nether garments for fresh bandages. The want of water now rendered me extremely weak and feverish ; and I had nearly abandoned all hopes of relief, when, about half-past four or five o'clock, the old pathway turned from the prairie grounds into a thickly wooded country, in an easterly direction ; through which I had not advanced half a mile when I heard a noise resembling a waterfall, to which I hastened my tottering steps, and in a few minutes was delighted at arriving on the banks of a deep and narrow rivulet, which forced its way

with great rapidity over some large stones that obstructed the channel.

After offering up a short prayer of thanksgiving for this providential supply, I threw myself into the water, forgetful of the extreme state of exhaustion to which I was reduced : it had nearly proved fatal, for my weak frame could not withstand the strength of the current, which forced me down a short distance, until I caught the bough of an overhanging tree, by means of which I regained the shore. Here were plenty of hips and cherries ; on which, with the water, I made a most delicious repast. On looking about for a place to sleep, I observed lying on the ground the hollow trunk of a large pine, which had been destroyed by lightning. I retreated into the cavity ; and having covered myself completely with large pieces of loose bark, quickly fell asleep. My repose was not of long duration ; for at the end of about two hours I was awakened by the growling of a bear, which had removed part of the bark covering, and was leaning over me with his snout, hesitating as to the means he should adopt to dislodge me ; the narrow limits of the trunk which

confined my body preventing him from making the attack with advantage. I instantly sprung up, seized my stick, and uttered a loud cry, which startled him, and caused him to recede a few steps; when he stopped, and turned about, apparently doubtful whether he would commence an attack. He determined on an assault; but feeling I had not sufficient strength to meet such an unequal enemy, I thought it prudent to retreat, and accordingly scrambled up an adjoining tree. My flight gave fresh impulse to his courage, and he commenced ascending after me. I succeeded however in gaining a branch, which gave me a decided advantage over him; and from which I was enabled to annoy his muzzle and claws in such a manner with my stick as effectually to check his progress. After scraping the bark some time with rage and disappointment, he gave up the task, and retired to my late dormitory, of which he took possession. The fear of falling off, in case I was overcome by sleep, induced me to make several attempts to descend; but each attempt aroused my ursine sentinel; and after many ineffectual efforts, I was obliged to remain there du-

ring the rest of the night. I fixed myself in that part of the trunk from which the principal grand branches forked, and which prevented me from falling during my fitful slumbers.

On the morning of the 27th, a little after sunrise, the bear quitted the trunk, shook himself, "cast a longing, lingering look" towards me, and slowly disappeared in search of his morning repast. After waiting some time, apprehensive of his return, I descended and resumed my journey through the woods in a north-north-east direction. In a few hours all my anxiety of the preceding night was more than compensated by falling in with a well-beaten horse-path, with fresh traces on it, both of hoofs and human feet: it lay through a clear open wood, in a north-east course, in which I observed numbers of small deer. About six in the evening I arrived at a spot where a party must have slept the preceding night. Round the remains of a large fire which was still burning were scattered several half-picked bones of grouse, partridges and ducks, all of which I collected with economical industry. After devouring the flesh I broiled the bones. The whole scarcely sufficed to

give me a moderate meal, but yet afforded a most seasonable relief to my famished body. I enjoyed a comfortable sleep this night close to the fire, uninterrupted by any nocturnal visitor. On the morning of the 28th I set off with cheerful spirits, fully impressed with the hope of a speedy termination to my sufferings. My course was northerly, and lay through a thick wood. Late in the evening I arrived at a stagnant pool, from which I merely moistened my lips; and having covered myself with some birch bark, slept by its side. The bears and wolves occasionally serenaded me during the night, but I did not see any of them. I rose early on the morning of the 29th, and followed the fresh traces all day through the wood, nearly north-east by north. I observed several deer, some of which came quite close to me; and in the evening I threw a stone at a small animal resembling a hare, the leg of which I broke. It ran away limping, but my feet were too sore to permit me to follow it. I passed the night by the side of a small stream, where I got a sufficient supply of hips and cherries. A few distant growls awoke me at intervals, but no animal

appeared. On the 30th the path took a more easterly turn, and the woods became thicker and more gloomy. I had now nearly consumed the remnant of my trowsers in bandages for my wretched feet ; and, with the exception of my shirt, was almost naked. The horse-tracks every moment appeared more fresh, and fed my hopes. Late in the evening I arrived at a spot where the path branched off in different directions : one led up rather a steep hill, the other descended into a valley, and the tracks on both were equally recent. I took the higher ; but after proceeding a few hundred paces through a deep wood, which appeared more dark from the thick foliage which shut out the rays of the sun, I returned, apprehensive of not procuring water for my supper, and descended the lower path. I had not advanced far when I imagined I heard the neighing of a horse. I listened with breathless attention, and became convinced it was no illusion. A few paces farther brought me in sight of several of those noble animals sporting in a handsome meadow, from which I was separated by a rapid stream. With some difficulty I crossed over, and

ascended the opposite bank. One of the horses approached me : I thought him "the prince of palfreys ; his neigh was like the bidding of a monarch, and his countenance enforced homage."

On advancing a short distance into the meadow the cheering sight of a small column of gracefully curling smoke announced my vicinity to human beings, and in a moment after two Indian women perceived me : they instantly fled to a hut which appeared at the farther end of the meadow. This movement made me doubt whether I had arrived among friends or enemies ; but my apprehensions were quickly dissipated by the approach of two men, who came running to me in the most friendly manner. On seeing the lacerated state of my feet, they carried me in their arms to a comfortable dwelling covered with deer-skins. To wash and dress my torn limbs, roast some roots, and boil a small salmon, seemed but the business of a moment. After returning thanks to that great and good Being in whose hands are the issues of life and death, and who had watched over my wandering steps, and rescued me from the many perilous dangers I encountered, I sat down to my

salmon, of which it is needless to say I made a hearty supper.

The family consisted of an elderly man, and his son, with their wives and children. I collected from their signs that they were aware of my being lost, and that they, with other Indians, and white men, had been out several days scouring the woods and plains in search of me. I also understood from them that our party had arrived at their destination, which was only a few hours' march from their habitation. They behaved to me with affectionate solicitude; and while the old woman was carefully dressing my feet, the men were endeavouring to make me comprehend their meaning. I had been fourteen days in a wilderness without holding "communion kind" with any human being; and I need not say I listened with a thousand times more real delight to the harsh and guttural voices of those poor Indians, than was ever experienced by the most enthusiastic admirer of melody from the thrilling tones of a Catalani, or the melting sweetness of a Stephens. As it was too late, after finishing my supper, to proceed farther that night, I retired to rest on a

comfortable couch of buffalo and deer skins. I slept soundly; and the morning of the 31st was far advanced before I awoke. After breakfasting on the remainder of the salmon I prepared to join my white friends. A considerable stream about ninety yards broad, called *Caur d'Alene* River, flowed close to the hut. The old man and his son accompanied me. We crossed the river in a canoe; after which they brought over three horses, and having enveloped my body in an Indian mantle of deer-skin, we mounted, and set off at a smart trot in an easterly direction. We had not proceeded more than seven miles when I felt the bad effects of having eaten so much salmon after so long a fast. I had a severe attack of indigestion, and for two hours suffered extreme agony; and, but for the great attention of the kind Indians, I think it would have proved fatal. About an hour after recommencing our journey we arrived in a clear wood, in which, with joy unutterable, I observed our Canadians at work hewing timber. I rode between the two natives. One of our men named *François Gardpic*, who had been on a trading excursion, joined

us on horseback. My deer-skin robe and sun-burnt features completely set his powers of recognition at defiance, and he addressed me as an Indian. I replied in French, by asking him how all our people were. Poor François appeared electrified, exclaimed “*Sainte Vierge!*” and galloped into the wood, vociferating “*O mes amis! mes amis! il est trouvé!—Oui, oui, il est trouvé!*”—“*Qui? qui?*” asked his comrades. “*Monsieur Cox! Monsieur Cox!*” replied François. “*Le voilà! le voilà!*” pointing towards me. Away went saws, hatchets, and axes, and each man rushed forward to the tents, where we had by this time arrived. It is needless to say that our astonishment and delight at my miraculous escape were mutual. The friendly Indians were liberally rewarded; the men were allowed a holiday, and every countenance bore the smile of joy and happiness.

CHAPTER IX.

Remarkable case of Mr. Pritchard, who was thirty-five days lost—Situation of Spokane House—Journey to the Flat-head lands, and description of that tribe—Return to Spokane House—Christmas day—Horse-eating—Spokane peculiarities—Articles of trade—A duel.

AFTER partaking of some refreshment we naturally reverted to the cause of my *égaremens*. It was easily explained. M'Lennan and I, as already mentioned, could only get one horse between us. On the morning of the 17th I had ridden from ten o'clock until twelve, at which hour we breakfasted. It was then M'Lennan's turn to mount. The party were divided into three divisions, and kept up rather a straggling march while in the plains. Every one had his own business to mind. Those who set off first, thought I was with the second or third division ; while they

imagined I was with the first. In this manner they continued on for upwards of two hours, until it became my turn to ride, when M'Lennan, after galloping up and down the line of march, missed me. On communicating the intelligence to Mr. Clarke, he at once ordered the whole to stop, and sent the Indian with several men back in search of me. In the mean time I had recovered from my summer-house dream, and had crossed the track by which they returned, and by that means missed them. On comparing the places where we slept the first night, we could not have been more than three miles asunder; and although they fired shots repeatedly, I was not fortunate enough to hear any of them. The direction I took the second morning separated us farther; for they went north, and I nearly due east; and the two horsemen I saw on that evening were part of those who were scouring the country in quest of me. The arrangements made for my recovery were hastily adopted, badly carried into execution, and too soon abandoned; for after the third night, they imagined I had fallen a prey to the wolves, and continued on their course. On arriving at Spokan

several other parties were sent out, but with what success it is needless to tell. From my youth, and consequent inexperience in the Indian country, the oldest *voyageurs* had given me up after the sixth day. A better knowledge of the productions of the soil would have enabled me to obtain other wild fruit and roots which, by contributing to my sustenance, would have greatly alleviated my sufferings; but my ignorance of such as were wholesome and nutritious prevented me from tasting any thing with which I had not been previously acquainted. On the day before my arrival, my clothes &c. had been sold by auction; all of which were however returned by the purchasers. After a few days' rest and proper attention I became nearly renovated in health, and before the end of a fortnight every trace of my painful privations had disappeared.

To such as may feel disposed to doubt the accuracy of the foregoing statement, I beg leave to say that Mr. Clarke, who then commanded the party, and who is now a member of the Hudson's-Bay Company, and the other gentlemen who were with him, are still alive; and although they

cannot vouch for the truth of each day's detail, they can for my absence and the extent of my sufferings, as evinced by my emaciated appearance on rejoining them. I can with truth assert that I have rather softened down than overcharged the statement, and therefore trust my candid readers will acquit me of any intention to practise on their credulity. Mine, however, was not a solitary case; and the sceptical no doubt will be more surprised to learn that a few years prior to this occurrence a gentleman named Pritchard, who belonged to the North-west Company, while stationed in the neighbourhood of English River, on the east side of the mountains, lost himself, and was *thirty-five* days wandering through the woods before he was found! In some respects he was better off than I; for he was well clothed, and from his experience of the country had recourse to expedients to procure food of which I never should have thought. He supported himself for some time by setting traps for hares, a few of which he took in the Indian manner. He likewise made snares out of the hair of his head, with which he caught some small fish; and he also oc-

asionally succeeded in killing a bird. These he was obliged to eat raw; and when all other resources failed, he was reduced to the necessity of eating grass, and a kind of moss, called by the Canadians *tripe de rocher*. He was found by Indians close to a small stream, endeavouring to crawl on his hands and feet, in a state of utter helplessness and exhaustion; and for some days previous to his being discovered he had eaten nothing whatever. On being brought to the fort he quickly recovered his ordinary health, the possession of which, I am happy to say, he enjoys to the present moment.

The spot selected for forming our establishment was a handsome point of land, formed by the junction of the Pointed Heart and Spokane rivers, thinly covered with pine and other trees, and close to a trading post of the North-west Company, under the command of a Mr. M'Millan, one of their clerks, who had ten men with him. He had two other posts detached from this: one about two hundred and forty miles from it, in a northeasterly direction, among a tribe called the Flat-heads, whose lands lie at the feet of the Rocky

Mountains, and are well stocked with buffaloes ; the other about two hundred miles, nearly due north, among a tribe called the Cootonais, in whose country there are plenty of beavers, deer, mountain sheep, and, at times, buffaloes. Mr. Finan M'Donald of the North-west Company had charge of the post among the Flat-heads ; and a Mr. Montour was stationed among the Cootonais. Mr. Pillet was despatched with six men to oppose the latter ; and Farnham and I were destined for the Flat-heads. Owing to the length of time our men were detained at Spokane to assist in cutting down timber for the fort, we did not set out until the 17th of October. We had twelve men and fourteen loaded horses. On leaving Spokane our course for four days was north-east, and lay through a handsome open country well watered, and bounded by hills rather thickly wooded. On the evening of the 20th we encamped on the banks of a fine river, which rises in the Rocky Mountains, flows through the lands of the Flat-heads, Pointed Heart, Spokane, and Chaudiere Indians, and falls into the Columbia about nine hundred miles from the sea. Its general course

is westerly, and it is commonly called the Flat-head River. The part at which we had arrived was about four hundred yards wide, with an easy current. As this was the spot for crossing to proceed to the Flat-head country, we had to construct rafts for that purpose; which being prepared on the 21st, we crossed over, and passed all our goods and horses in safety, with the exception of one of the latter, which was drowned by the awkwardness of the man who held the reins. The day after, the weather set in very cold, accompanied by snow, which continued almost incessantly for fourteen days. During this period our route lay nearly due east through thick woods of lofty pine and cedar. The horses suffered dreadfully from the want of grass, the deep snow having completely covered the ground, and their only nourishment was obtained by plucking and chewing the branches of the adjoining trees. A detail of each day's proceedings would be a cold and unnecessary repetition. We rose each morning at day-break, loaded the horses, travelled two or three hours, when we stopped for breakfast; waited an hour for this meal, and then continued

on until four or five o'clock in the evening, when we stopped for the night. The path was narrow, and the trees covered with snow, which, from the loaded horses constantly coming in collision with the branches on either side, fell down at every moment in immense masses, annoyed us considerably, and greatly impeded our progress. Where the pine predominated, the under-growth was so thick that we could not obtain sufficient space for our tent; but where the cedar prevailed, we occasionally were enabled to pitch it. This cheerless and gloomy march continued for fourteen days, during which period we seldom had a dry article of clothing on us.

On the 4th of November we cleared the woods, and arrived in a large meadow of prime grass, in which we immediately pitched our tent, and remained for three days to refresh the horses. Our principal subsistence while in the woods was horse-flesh and boiled rice; but here our hunters supplied us with some of the Rocky Mountain sheep called big-horns, the flesh of which is delicious, and resembles in taste Welch mutton, but at this season is more delicate. From the time we

quitted Spokane we had not seen a native. On the 7th we recommenced our journey eastward : the weather became more moderate, and the recent snows quickly vanished from the surrounding trees. For three days and a half our progress was through undulating meadows, thinly wooded, in which our hunters killed some deer. On the 10th we came to a small village of the Flat-head nation, chiefly consisting of old men, women, and children. We were quite charmed with their frank and hospitable reception, and their superiority in cleanliness over any of the tribes we had hitherto seen. Their lodges were conical, but very spacious, and were formed by a number of buffalo and moose skins thrown over long poles in such a manner as to keep them quite dry. The fire was placed in the centre, and the ground all around it was covered with mats and clean skins free from the vermin we felt so annoying at the lower parts of the Columbia. They had a quantity of dried buffalo, of which we purchased a good deal ; and as they gave us to understand that the great body of their tribe were in the mountains hunting, we determined to stop here ;

and accordingly set about constructing a log-house. The cold now became more severe, and the snow began again to fall heavily, which induced the men to work hard; and before three weeks we had erected the frame of a good substantial building, which in another week was roofed in, and afforded a welcome shelter to the poor fellows whose only covering was their blankets.

While the house was being built many of the tribe arrived, from whom we purchased a number of beaver skins. Their hunt had been rather unsuccessful, and attended with disastrous results; for they informed us, that after killing buffalo sufficient for the winter, they were surprised by their old enemies the Black-feet Indians, (whose lands lie on the east side of the Rocky Mountains,) who killed several of their warriors, and took many prisoners. They appeared much dejected at their misfortunes; and one of the chiefs seemed deeply to lament the loss of his wife, who had been captured with some other women by the enemy. Part of the tribe pitched their tents some distance above us at the

north-west establishment. They were passionately fond of tobacco, and while they remained with us never ceased smoking. Having bought all their skins, and given them credit for some articles until the spring, the greater part of them set off to make their winter's hunt, which their recent misfortunes had protracted to a very late period. When the house was finished I got a good canoe built of cedar planks, in which I embarked with six men, and taking leave of Farnham, on the 18th of December, descended the Flat-head river on my return to Spokane. Our progress was slow and full of danger, from the great number of rapids, and the force of the current. The land on each side was high, and the banks in some places so precipitous, that for three nights we could not find room enough to make our beds on shore, and were constrained to sleep in a standing position, rolled up in our cloaks and blankets; leaving the canoe in the water, fastened to poles driven some distance into the ground. On the 25th we arrived at a place where the river forked into four or five small channels, which afterwards united and formed a lake about five miles long,

and two broad. We took the centre channel ; but it was full of snags, which broke several of the ribs of our canoe, and we were forced to land on a marshy island, full of small willows, and without a bit of dry wood to make a fire. This was a horrible situation ; and the state of our canoe prevented us from proceeding to the main land ; so that we had no alternative but, seated on fallen trees and covered with our blankets, to pass the night in water up to our ancles. About midnight it commenced snowing, which continued until morning. I thought of my preceding Christmas off Cape Horn, and was puzzled to decide which was the most enviable,—a tempestuous storm in the high southern latitudes, after losing a couple of men—or a half-inundated island, without fire, at the foot of the Rocky Mountains, covered with sheets of snow. In my slumbers I imagined I was sitting at my father's table surrounded by the smiling domestic group, all anxious to partake of a smoking sirloin, and a richly dotted plum-pudding, while the juvenile members recounted to each other with triumphant joy the amount of their Christmas boxes ; but, alas !

Sorrow return'd with the dawning of morn,
And the voice in my dreaming ear melted away.

The 26th opened on us with snow-clad mountains and forests. With much difficulty we succeeded in patching our battered canoe sufficiently tight to bring us to *terra firma*, where we struck up a fire of pine, spruce and cedar, that would have roasted a solid square of oxen. We remained here all the day, and repaired the canoe, so as to enable us to proceed on the 27th. The day after, we reached the place at which we crossed on our way upwards : here we left the canoe, set off by land on foot, and reached Spokane in time to partake of the new year's festivities. During my absence Mr. Clarke had constructed a snug and commodious dwelling-house, containing four rooms and a kitchen ; together with a comfortable house for the men, and a capacious store for the furs and trading goods ; the whole surrounded by paling, and flanked by two bastions with loopholes for musketry. I passed the remainder of the winter at this place ; and between hunting, fishing, reading, &c. we contrived to spend the time agreeably enough. We lived principally on

deer, trout, and carp, and occasionally killed a fat horse, as a substitute for beef. Custom had now so far reconciled us to the flesh of this animal, that we often preferred it to what in Europe might be regarded as luxuries. Foals or colts are not good, although a few of our men preferred them. A horse for the table should not be under three years, or above seven. The flesh of those which are tame, well-fed, and occasionally worked, is tender and firm, and the fat hard and white : it is far superior to the wild horse, the flesh of which is loose and stringy, and the fat yellow and rather oily. We generally killed the former for our own table ; and I can assure my readers that if they sat down to a fat rib, or a rump-steak off a well-fed four-year-old, without knowing the animal, they would imagine themselves regaling on a piece of prime ox beef. In February we took immense quantities of carp in Spokane river above its junction with the Pointed-heart, and in a few weeks after the trout came in great abundance.

The Spokans we found to be a quiet, honest, inoffensive tribe ; and although we had fortified our establishment in the manner above mentioned,

we seldom closed the gates at night. Their country did not abound in furs, and they were rather indolent in hunting. Their chief, *Illimspokanee*, or the Son of the Sun, was a harmless old man, who spent a great portion of his time between us and Mr. M'Millan. We entered into a compact with that gentleman to abstain from giving the Indians any spirituous liquors, to which both parties strictly adhered. Mr. Clarke, who was an old trader himself, had often witnessed the baneful effects of giving ardent spirits to Indians, while he was in the service of the North-west Company, at all whose establishments on the east side of the Rocky Mountains it was an almost invariable custom. When in a state of intoxication it is quite impossible to check their savage propensities, and murder frequently is the consequence; a remarkable instance of which I subsequently witnessed in my journey across the continent. By this arrangement both parties saved themselves much trouble and expense, and kept the poor natives in a state of blissful ignorance. In other respects also we agreed very well with our opponent, and neither party evinced

any of the turbulent or lawless spirit, which gave so ferocious an aspect to the opposition of the rival companies on the east side of the mountains. The great object of every Indian was to obtain a gun. Now a good gun could not be had under twenty beaver skins; a few short ones we gave for fifteen: and some idea of the profit may be formed, when I state that the wholesale price of the gun is about one pound seven shillings, while the average value of twenty beaver skins is about twenty-five pounds! Two yards of cloth, which originally cost twelve shillings, would generally bring six or eight beavers, value eight or ten pounds! and so on in proportion for other articles;—but they were satisfied, and we had no cause to complain. The Spokans are far superior to the Indians of the coast in cleanliness; but by no means equal in this respect to the Flat-heads. The women are good wives, and most affectionate mothers: the old, cheerful, and complete slaves to their families; the young, lively, and confiding; and whether married or single, free from the vice of incontinence. Their village was situated at the point formed by the junction of the two

rivers. Some houses were oblong, others conical; and were covered with mats or skins according to the wealth of the proprietor. Their chief riches are their horses, which they generally obtain in barter from the Nez Percés, in return for the goods they obtain from us for their furs: each man is therefore the founder of his own fortune, and their riches or poverty are generally proportioned to their activity or indolence. The vice of gambling, however, is prevalent among them, and some are such slaves to it, that they frequently lose all their horses. The spot where

The rude forefathers of the hamlet sleep

is about midway between the village and the fort, and has rather a picturesque effect at a distance. When a man dies, several horses are killed, and the skins are attached to the end of long poles, which are planted in the graves: the number of horses sacrificed is proportioned to the wealth of the individual. Besides the horse-skins, buffalo and deer robes, leather shirts, blankets, pieces of blue, green, and scarlet cloth, strips of calico, moccasins, provisions, warlike weapons, &c. are

placed in and about the cemetery; all of which they imagine will be more or less necessary for the deceased in the world of spirits. As their lands are much infested by wolves, which destroy the foals, they cannot rear horses in such numbers as the Nez Percés, from whom they are obliged to purchase them annually. They never kill any for their own use, but felt no repugnance to eat the flesh at our place. As I may hereafter have occasion to speak more of this tribe, I shall for the present revert to the continuation of our proceedings. In the beginning of May, Messrs. Farnham and Pillet returned from their wintering posts. Their success exceeded our anticipations. Both Flat-heads and Cootonais made excellent winter hunts, and returned in the spring loaded with beaver. Mr. Pillet fought a duel with Mr. Montour of the North-west, with pocket pistols, at six paces; both hits; one, in the collar of the coat, and the other in the leg of the trousers. Two of their men acted as seconds, and the tailor speedily healed their wounds.

CHAPTER X.

Execution of an Indian for robbery—War between Great Britain and the United States—Dissolution of the Pacific Fur Company—Author joins the North-west Company, and proceeds to the Rocky Mountains—Meets a party, and returns to the sea—Robbery of goods, and successful stratagem to recover the property—Attack at night—Dog-eating—Author and three men pursued by Indians—Narrow escape.

THE different parties having now assembled at Spokan House, we took our departure from that establishment on the 25th of May, on our return to Astoria with the produce of our winter's trade. Mr. Pillet was left in charge of the fort with four men. We had twenty-eight loaded horses; and on the 30th of May reached the entrance of the creek off Lewis River, where we had left our barge and canoes.

In the course of this journey we passed some of the places at which I had slept during my wanderings in the preceding August. I pointed out

to my fellow-travellers several heaps of stones which I had piled together, and on which I had scratched my name.

We were detained a couple of days at the entrance of the creek to repair the barge and canoes, in consequence of the Indians having taken a quantity of nails out of the former. Our tents were pitched close to the village, and not suspecting any dishonesty on the part of the natives, we kept no watch the first night. Our confidence, however, was misplaced, for in the morning we discovered that a daring robbery had been committed during the night. In the tent in which Mr. Clarke slept he kept a large *garde-vin*, which he had locked on retiring to rest, but the key of which he had omitted to take out: the tent was closely fastened, and while he was asleep, the strings were untied, the *garde-vin* opened, and a valuable silver goblet stolen there-out! Several loose articles were also taken, and bundles belonging to many of the men were carried away. Mr. Clarke immediately assembled the principal Indians; told them of the robbery; declared if the stolen property were returned he

would pardon the offender ; but added, if it were not, and that he should find the thief, he would hang him. The chief, with several others, promised they would use their best exertions to discover the delinquent and bring back the property ; but the day passed over without tidings of either. On the second night, (the 31st,) two sentinels were placed at each end of the camp, with orders to conceal themselves and keep a sharp look out. Shortly after midnight they observed the figure of a man creeping slowly out of one of the tents, and carrying with him a bundle of clothes, a powder-horn, &c. They silently watched his progress, until they saw him in the act of jumping into a small canoe which he had in the creek, upon which they sprung forward, stopped the canoe, and seized him. We were instantly alarmed ; and a general search taking place, a quantity of articles belonging to the men were missed, together with a pistol of Farnham's and a dagger of mine, all of which were stolen that night. Most of the property was found in the canoe ; but he refused to give any account of the remainder. We had not the slightest suspicion of this man, who had

been remarkably well treated by us ; in consequence of which, and the aggravated nature of the robbery, Mr. Clarke determined to put his threat into execution. He accordingly ordered a temporary gallows to be erected, and had the arms and legs of the culprit pinioned. About eight o'clock in the morning of the 1st of June he assembled the chief and all the Indians of the village, and made a short speech, in which he told them that the prisoner had abused his confidence, violated the rights of hospitality, and committed an offence for which he ought to suffer death ; that from an anxiety to keep on good terms with all their nation he had overlooked many thefts committed while he had been there last August, which lenity, he was sorry to say, had only led to more daring acts of robbery ; and that as a terror to others, and in order to show that it was not fear that prevented him from taking an earlier notice of such aggressions, he had now resolved that this robber should be hanged. The Indians acquiesced in this decision ; and the chief declared that the prisoner did not belong to their tribe, but was a kind of outlaw, of whom

they were all afraid. The gallows being now prepared, Mr. Clarke gave the signal, and after great resistance, during which he screamed in the most frightful manner, the wretched criminal was launched into eternity. His countrymen looked on the whole proceeding with the greatest unconcern ; but the unfortunate being himself exhibited none of that wonderful self-command, or stoical indifference to death, which we observed in others, and for which Indians in general are so celebrated. By the time it was supposed life was extinct, Mr. M'Lennan with three men set off with the horses on his return to Spokane, and we embarked in the canoes. The current was swift, and we arrived early the following day at the mouth of Lewis River, a little below which we found the parties of Messrs. M'Kenzie and Stuart, where we had appointed to meet them on our separation the preceding autumn. From this place we proceeded together, and arrived at Astoria on the 11th of June, 1813, without incurring any material accident. We found all our friends in good health ; but a total revolution had taken place in the affairs of the Company. Messrs. John George M'Tavish.

and Joseph La Rocque, of the North-west Company, with two canoes and sixteen men, had arrived a few days before us. From these gentlemen we learned for the first time, that war had been declared the year before between Great Britain and the United States; and that in consequence of the strict blockade of the American ports by British cruisers, no vessel would venture to proceed to our remote establishment during the continuation of hostilities: added to which, a trading vessel which had touched at the Columbia in the early part of the spring, had informed our people that the ship *Beaver* was blocked up in Canton.

These unlucky and unexpected circumstances, joined to the impossibility of sustaining ourselves another year in the country without fresh supplies, which, in the then posture of affairs, it would be hopeless to expect, induced our propriety to enter into negotiations with Mr. M'Tavish, who had been authorised by the North-west Company to treat with them. In a few weeks an amicable arrangement was made, by which Mr. M'Tavish agreed to purchase all the

furs, merchandise, provisions, &c. of our Company at a certain valuation, stipulating to provide a safe passage back to the United States, either by sea, or across the continent, for such members of it as chose to return; and at the same time offering to those who should wish to join the North-west Company and remain in the country the same terms as if they had originally been members of that Company. Messrs. Ross, M'Lennan, and I, took advantage of these liberal proposals, and some time after Mr. Duncan M'Dougall, one of the directors, also joined the North-west. The Americans of course preferred returning to their own country, as did also Mr. Gabriel Franchère,* and a few other Canadian clerks.

The pleasure I experienced in joining an establishment, every member of which was a fellow-subject, was mingled with deep regret at parting from so many of my late associates, for some of

* From this gentleman's knowledge of the Chinook language Mr. M'Tavish made him handsome offers to join the North-west Company, which he refused. He however remained until the following spring.

whom I entertained a sincere regard,—a regard which I feel pleasure in saying was mutual, and which the difference of country could not diminish. My friends Clapp, Halsey, and Matthews were genuine Americans of the Washingtonian school, and consequently untinctured by any of the unnatural and acrimonious hatred to the land of their forefathers which, among a large portion of their countrymen, was so prevalent at that angry period. And though the sanguine hopes they had entertained of realising in a few years an independence were destroyed by the war, I feel pleasure in being able to add that they are now happily flourishing in their native country.

As Mr. M'Tavish expected dispatches overland from the directors at Montreal, and as it was necessary to acquaint the gentlemen inland with the change that affairs had taken at Astoria, Mr. La Rocque and I proceeded with two canoes and sixteen men well armed to the interior, with orders to leave letters at Oakinagan and Spokane, explanatory of these circumstances, and thence continue on across the Rocky Mountains to Fort

William, (the great central depôt at the head of Lake Superior,) unless we met an express, in which case we were to return to the sea. We left Astoria on the 5th of July, and having no lading in our canoes, except provisions, we passed in safety the hostile Indians at the great rapids and falls. They were very numerous at the latter place; but seeing our men well armed, and our canoes empty, they had no idea of risking their lives, when no plunder could be obtained. As I shall have occasion hereafter to give a particular description of the country about the upper parts of the Columbia, I shall now merely mention that we passed the navigable part of it, and reached the place where one of its sources issues out of the Rocky Mountains on the 2nd of September, after a tedious and laborious voyage of two months, against a strong current. We laid up our canoe, and were preparing to set out on foot, when we were agreeably surprised by the arrival of Messrs. John Stuart, Alexander Stewart, and Joseph M'Gillivray, partners of the Northwest Company, who with twenty men were on their way to Astoria, armed with full powers to

join Mr. M'Tavish, in purchasing the stock of the American Company. They acquainted us that the North-west Company's ship called the "Isaac Tod" sailed from London, under the convoy of a sloop of war for the Columbia, and would arrive early in the autumn, with a large cargo for the Indian trade. These gentlemen brought several newspapers; and having heard nothing from the civilised world for two years, we devoured their contents. Mr. M'Gillivray had served the preceding campaign in the American war as a lieutenant in the Canadian chasseurs, a corps commanded by his father the Hon. William M'Gillivray, and composed chiefly of the gentlemen and *voyageurs* of the North-west Company. He had been engaged in several smart affairs with the enemy, and was at the taking of Michilimacinac, at which and other places he had considerably distinguished himself. He was therefore our great chronicler of recent events, and during our passage downwards our thousand and one interrogatories seldom allowed his tongue half an hour's rest. None but those who have been so long debarred from the passing scenes of the great world can form an idea

of the greedy voracity with which exiles so circumstanced swallow the most trifling news. A remnant of a newspaper is invaluable; and even an auctioneer's advertisement, or a quack-doctor's puff is read with interest.

We reached Astoria on the 11th of October, having travelled from the 5th of July upwards of two thousand three hundred miles. We remained here till the latter end of the month in the expectation of seeing the "Isaac Tod;" but as that vessel did not arrive, the proprietors determined to send a strong party to the interior with a supply of such goods as the fort could furnish for the winter's trade. The necessary arrangements being completed, we set off on the 29th of October. Our party consisted of Messrs. John Stuart, Donald Mackenzie, Joseph M'Gillivray, La Rocque, M'Donald, Read, and the author, with fifty-five men. On arriving at the first rapids few Indians made their appearance; and from their peaceable demeanour, we did not think it necessary to observe our usual caution in guarding the portages. We passed the first unmolested, and had carried about one-third of the goods over the second,

when we were alarmed by a loud cry, and immediately after one of the men appeared, and stated that he and another man had been attacked by a large party of the natives, who had knocked them down, and robbed them of two bales of dry goods, with which they made off into the woods, and that he feared others of the men would also be attacked. Orders were immediately despatched to Messrs. La Rocque and M'Gillivray, who were at the foot of the portage, to advance with a few of their men, while Mr. John Stuart and I, with ten men, proceeded from the upper end. Mr. M'Donald remained in charge at one end, and Mr. Donald Mackenzie at the other.

On arriving about the middle of the portage, where the village was situated, we found the pathway guarded by fifty or sixty Indians, with their war-shirts on, and fully armed, apparently determined to dispute the passage. The moment they perceived our approach they placed their arrows in their bows, which they presented at us, at the same time jumping like kangaroos backwards and forwards, and from right to left, in such a manner as to render it almost impossible

to take a steady aim at any of them. In our hurry we had not time to put on our leathern armour, and from the hostile appearance of the savages, some of our men declared they would not advance a step farther. Mr. Stuart shortly addressed them, pointing out the dangerous situation in which we were plac'd, between two portages; that if the enemy observed the least symptom of fear, they would become the assailants, in which case we could neither advance nor retreat, and must ultimately be cut off, adding at the same time he would do every thing in his power to avoid coming to extremities; but that, above all things, it was absolutely necessary to show them the most determined front. The men hereupon consented to fight. He then informed the Indians that he did not wish to fight—but that if the stolen goods were not returned, the white men would destroy their village and take all their property. We were imperfectly acquainted with their language, and they either did not, or affected not to understand the meaning of his address; for they still continued their kangaroo movements with their arrows presented, preserving at the same time

the strictest silence. We were somewhat puzzled at this conduct; but as we were anxious to avoid bloodshed, and at the same time to recover the stolen property, Mr. Stuart judged it prudent to wait the arrival of the other party. In a few seconds Messrs. La Rocque and M'Gillivray with their men appeared at the rear of the Indians, who were thus placed between two fires; but they had the sagacity to perceive that we could not act on the offensive without endangering our own lives. About one half of them therefore quickly turned round, and by this movement presented a hostile front to each of our small parties. During this time none of their old men, women, or children, made their appearance; and as Mr. Stuart supposed they had been conveyed from the village, he requested Mr. La Rocque to advance with a few of his men into the wood on his right, and at the same time sent me with five of our party to the left, ordering each of us to seize all men, women, and children, we could find, for the purpose of detaining them as hostages until the property should be returned. Messrs. Stuart and M'Gillivray, with the re-

mainder of the men, still kept possession of the pathway in front and rear of the village, and the enemy for some time were ignorant of the *ruse de guerre* we had adopted. I proceeded about forty yards in an oblique direction to the left, with my party, when we imagined we heard voices before us: we therefore advanced slowly and cautiously a few paces farther, until we arrived at a large rock. I sent three men round one end of it, and proceeded myself with the remaining two round the other; and, as we turned the left corner, we perceived three old men, with several women and children, sitting round a fire; some of whom were sharpening iron and flint heads for arrows, which, after being heated in the fire, were dipped into a wooden bowl containing a thick blackish liquid. On observing us they attempted to escape, when the other three men appeared. We instantly seized their armoury, and took two of the old men, three women, and some children prisoners. They were much frightened, and thought we would put them to death, but on our explaining that they would sustain no injury if our goods were returned, they appeared more tranquil, and

came with us quietly until we reached Mr. Stuart, who was still in the same situation. La Rocque was equally fortunate, and had captured one old man, four women, and five children, on his side of the wood, with whom he had just appeared in sight as my party arrived.

The warriors were quite staggered at finding we had made so many prisoners, and fearing we might follow their own mode, which was either to kill them or make them slaves, they at once laid down their arms, and offered to go in search of the bales, provided we would liberate the prisoners. Mr. Stuart replied that none of them would be injured, but that they should remain in custody until the property was restored and our people safely over the portage. A guard was then stationed over the prisoners, and word was sent to M'Donald to order his men to recommence the carriage of the goods; during the progress of which we kept up a chain of sentinels *en route*. By the time we had nearly finished three of the Indians, whose wives were captives, brought a great part of the contents of the bales, which they alleged they took by force from the thieves, who

had cut open the envelopes and concealed the remainder ; and they therefore hoped we would allow their relations to return home. Mr. Stuart told them he was determined not to allow one of them to stir until every article that had been stolen was brought back. The eldest of the three declared that it was very unjust of the white men to punish him and his relations for the dishonesty of others, and that when he expected a reward for his exertions in bringing back so much property, he found his wife and children were to be detained as slaves. All this appeared very plausible ; but we recognised this very fellow as one of the most prominent and active of the armed band, and apparently their leader.

He made some farther remonstrances to the same effect ; but finding we were inflexible, he went away with his two companions ; and in about half an hour after returned, accompanied by several others, with the remainder of the stolen property. They alleged the thieves had run away, and on asking them for their chief, they said he was absent. The canoes having been now laden, Mr. Stuart told them that he should

release their friends and relations for this time, but that if another attempt was ever made, the white people would punish them severely ; and as a mark of his anger at their late conduct, he would not then give them the usual gratuity of tobacco. The prisoners were then released, and we pushed off. As it was rather late, we could not advance more than three miles, when we encamped in a small cove on the left side, behind which was a thick wood of hazel, beech, and pine. We had a large fire at each end of the camp ; and the party was divided into two watches. The forepart of the night passed off quietly ; but about two o'clock in the morning we were alarmed by one of the flank sentinels being brought to the centre wounded. He stated that he and two of his comrades had approached the fire for the purpose of lighting their pipes, when several arrows were discharged at them from the wood, one of which wounded him in the left arm ; upon hearing which Messrs. La Rocque and M'Donald, who commanded the watch, fired into the wood. The tents were immediately struck, and the men ordered to withdraw from the fires and con-

centrate themselves behind the canoes. About ten minutes afterwards a shower of arrows was discharged from the same place, followed by loud yells; but some passed over our heads, while others were intercepted by the canoes, in which they remained fast. The two watches were now ordered to fire a volley alternately, and load immediately. The first discharge caused much rustling among the leaves and branches; the second, as we supposed, completely dislodged them, and from moans heard from the retreating savages we had reason to think that some of our balls took effect. It was a cold damp morning, and what between the fatigues and dangers of the preceding day, fear, chiliness, and the want of sleep, our men did not seem much disposed for fighting. Mr. Stuart therefore ordered each man a double allowance of rum "to make his courage cheerie," and the moment daylight began to dawn the canoes were thrown into the water, and the lading immediately commenced.

The canoe-men embarked first; and we followed. The last man on shore was a celebrated half-bred hunter, named Pierre Michel, and just

as he was about stepping into his canoe, one of the men perceived a tall Indian emerge from the wood, and bend his bow : he had scarcely time to warn Michel of his danger ere the arrow winged its flight, and completely pierced his hat, in which it remained fixed. Michel instantly turned round, and as the savage retreated into the wood, fired, and hit him somewhere about the knee. He then sprung into the canoe : we discharged a few more shots, pushed off, and paddled quickly to the opposite side. From the greyish twilight of the morning we had only an imperfect view of the Indian ; but the men who had the best opportunity of seeing him were of opinion that he was the same who had expostulated the day before about the detention of his wife, after he had brought back part of the goods. We landed about ten miles farther up on the right side, on an open point ; and as the canoes wanted repairing, and the men stood in need of repose, it was deemed expedient to remain there during the day. I forgot to mention that one of our Iroquois hunters sucked the wound which the man had

received from the arrow in the arm : this probably saved the poor fellow's life, as we had reason to think the arrow was poisoned. The day after the arm became quite black from the wrist to the shoulder ; but, by the use of caustic applications, the dangerous symptoms were dispersed, and in a few weeks he recovered his ordinary health.

From this place to the narrows and falls we saw no Indians ; but at the latter we found about fifteen lodges of the Eneeshurs. As our provisions were nearly consumed we were obliged to purchase twenty dogs from them. It was the first time I had eaten any of the flesh of this animal, and nothing but stern necessity could have induced me to partake of it. The president of our mess called it *mutton*, which it somewhat resembles in taste. We generally had it roasted, but the Canadians preferred it boiled, and the majority of them seemed to think it superior to horse-flesh. In this, however, I entirely differ from them, for the latter is a cleaner animal, and in taste bears a stronger resemblance to beef than

the dog does to mutton. The natives behaved themselves quietly, and did not show any disposition to pilfer.

From hence to the Wallah Wallah river we obtained no horses, and our chief support consisted of one hundred and fifty dogs, which we purchased at the different villages. The Wallah Wallahs received us in their usual friendly manner, and we purchased from them about twenty good horses.

Mr. Read, accompanied by eight men, (excellent hunters,) left us here on an experimental journey to the country of the Shoshoné or Snake Indians, on whose lands he had seen great quantities of beaver in the course of his journey across the continent with Mr. Hunt. His party took sixteen of the horses with them.

After leaving this place the weather set in very cold, accompanied by occasional showers of snow, and we became apprehensive that we should encounter much difficulty in reaching our various wintering posts. We therefore stopped at a village a short distance above Lewis River, on the south side of the Columbia; where, with hard bargaining, and after giving an exorbitant price,

we obtained six horses. With these and three men I was ordered to proceed across the country to Spokane House, for the purpose of bringing down a sufficient number of the company's horses to Oakinagan, where the canocs were to stop, the trading goods having to be conveyed from thence by land-carriage to their respective winter destinations.

Two of the horses carried our provisions and blankets; and as we learned from the Wallah Wallahs that the relations of the Indian who had been hanged by Mr. Clarke in the spring were in the plains, and had declared their determination to have satisfaction for his death, we got particular orders not to separate, or on any account to tire our horses by deer-hunting. I made the men change their muskets for short trading guns, about the size of carbines; with which, a brace of pistols, and a dagger each, we set out on our overland journey. The two first days we passed in hard galloping, without meeting any thing worth noticing; but about ten o'clock on the morning of the third day, as we were preparing to remount after breakfast, we observed three Indians about a

mile distant, advancing from the direction of Lewis River. They were mounted, and, on perceiving us, stopped a few minutes in order to ascertain our numbers. We did not like this; and made signs to them to approach, which they affected not to understand: but after reconnoitring us some time, and making themselves certain that our number did not exceed four, they wheeled about, and galloped back in the same direction. Being now of opinion that their intentions were not friendly, we increased our speed, and for upwards of three hours none of them made their appearance. Our horses being nearly exhausted, we slackened the reins for about half an hour, after putting two of the most jaded under the saddle-bags. This rest brought them to again, and probably saved us; for about two o'clock we observed large clouds of dust in a south-westerly direction, which, on clearing away, displayed to our view between thirty and forty of the savages on horseback in pursuit of us. *Sauve qui peut* was now the cry; and as the two spare horses with the saddle-bags retarded our escape, we left them behind, and galloped away for our lives. The

enemy gradually gained on us; but we observed that the greater number had fallen back, or given up the pursuit, and at the end of two hours only ten were in sight. Still we did not think ourselves a match for them; but shortly after their numbers were reduced to eight, apparently well mounted and armed. Our horses began to totter, and it became quite evident could not proceed much farther at such a rate. I knew the men were made of good materials, and therefore proposed to them to dismount, take our station behind the horses, and when our pursuers came within the range of our shot, each to cover his man, and fire; after which, if we had not time to reload, we could work with our pistols. They all agreed; but the moment the enemy perceived us dismount and take up our position, they at once guessed our object, and turned about for the purpose of retreating. We instantly fired, and two of their horses fell: their riders quickly mounted behind their companions, and in a short time disappeared. We were now quite overjoyed at seeing the horse with our provisions gallop up to us; but the other, which carried our blankets was, I suppose, cap-

tured. The report of our fire-arms brought us much more important relief, by the appearance of ten young hunters belonging to the Spokane nation, with every one of whom we were well acquainted, and on whose hunting-grounds we then were. On telling them of our escape, they were quite indignant, and declared that, although they were not at war with the Nez Percés Indians, they would willingly join us in pursuit of them, and chastise them for their presumption in following their white friends to their hunting-grounds ; adding, that they knew their chief's heart would be glad at any assistance they could render us. I thanked them for their friendly offer, which I declined ; assigning as a reason, that we wished to live on good terms with all the nations, and that I had no doubt we should be able to convince the foolish people who had lately pursued us of the impolicy of their conduct towards the whites. We proceeded about ten miles farther that evening, and slept in company with the Spokans, who kept watch in turn during the night. The following day, the 21st of November, two of them accompanied us, and we arrived at the fort about four in the evening without meeting any farther danger.

CHAPTER XI.

Author proceeds to Oakinagan, and thence to the Flat-heads, where he passes the winter—Cruel treatment of the Black-foot prisoners by the Flat-heads—Horrible spectacle—Buffalo the cause of war between the two tribes—Women—Government—Peace and war chiefs—Wolves—Anecdote of a dog—Syrup of birch—Surgical and medical knowledge of Flat-heads—Remarkable cure of rheumatism—Their ideas of a future state ; and curious tradition respecting the beavers—Name of Flat-head a misnomer—A marriage.

As dispatch was necessary, owing to the lateness of the season, I remained only one night at Spokan House, and set off early in the morning of the 22d November for Oakinagan. I took two additional men with me, and fifty horses. The road was good, the distance about one hundred and fifty miles, and no danger to be apprehended from Indians. Having plenty of horses to change,

we went on briskly; and on the evening of the 25th arrived at the Columbia, opposite the entrance of Oakinagan river, where the fort was built. On crossing over I found that the northern parties had set off for their wintering quarters; and as I was appointed to take charge of those intended for the eastern posts, I slept only that night at Oakinagan, and the next morning (the 26th) had all the goods transported across the river. The following is an extract from the letter of instructions directed to me on this occasion, the whole of which is rather lengthy and uninteresting for insertion:—

“ On your arrival here, you will assume the immediate management of the brigade, and every thing else during the voyage;* and make the best of your way to Spokane House, where you will make as little delay as possible. From thence you will proceed to join Mr. M'Millan at the Flat-heads; and if you are reduced to eat horses, either at Spokane or farther on, they ought to be the worst.” The liberal writer of this economical ad-

* This word is used generally in the Indian country for all *terraqueous* journies; and *voyageurs* is the term applied to the Canadian canoe men,

vice was in other respects a very worthy good-natured individual, and in his own person evinced the most Spartan contempt for the good things of the table. Tobacco was his mistress; and from the moment he rose until he retired to rest, his calumet was seldom allowed to cool. I was not, however, philosopher enough to prefer the intoxicating fumes of the Virginian weed to the substantial enjoyment of fat and lean; and candidly confess, that in my choice of horses for the kettle, I wilfully departed from my instructions, by selecting those whose ribs were least visible.

We arrived safely at Spokane, at which place I slept one night, and then continued on for the Flat-heads with eight men and twelve loaded horses. We pursued the same route I had followed the preceding winter with my friend Farnham, through the thick woods along the banks of the Flat-head river; and after suffering great hardships from cold and snow, reached Mr. M'Millan on the 24th of December, with the loss of two horses, which we were obliged to leave in the woods from exhaustion. The fort was about forty miles higher up in an easterly direction than the

place Farnham and I had chosen for the log-house. It had a good trading store, a comfortable house for the men, and a snug box for ourselves; all situated on a point formed by the junction of a bold mountain torrent with the Flat-head river, and surrounded on all sides with high and thickly wooded hills, covered with pine, spruce, larch, beech, birch, and cedar. A large band of the Flat-head warriors were encamped about the fort. They had recently returned from the buffalo country, and had revenged their defeat of the preceding year, by a signal victory over their enemies the Black-feet; several of whose warriors, with their women, they had taken prisoners. M'Millan's tobacco and stock of trading goods had been entirely expended previous to my arrival, and the Indians were much in want of ammunition, &c. My appearance, or I should rather say, the goods I brought with me, was therefore a source of great joy to both parties. The natives smoked the much-loved weed for several days successively. Our hunters killed a few mountain sheep, and I brought up a bag of flour, a bag of rice, plenty of tea and coffee, some arrow-

root, and fifteen gallons of prime rum. We spent a comparatively happy Christmas, and, by the side of a blazing fire in a warm room, forgot the sufferings we endured in our dreary progress through the woods. There was, however, in the midst of our festivities, a great drawback from the pleasure we should have otherwise enjoyed. I allude to the unfortunate Black-feet who had been captured by the Flat-heads. Having been informed that they were about putting one of their prisoners to death, I went to their camp to witness the spectacle. The man was tied to a tree; after which they heated an old barrel of a gun until it became red hot, with which they burned him on the legs, thighs, neck, cheeks, and belly. They then commenced cutting the flesh from about the nails, which they pulled out, and next separated the fingers from the hand joint by joint. During the performance of these cruelties the wretched captive never winced, and instead of suing for mercy, he added fresh stimulants to their barbarous ingenuity by the most irritating reproaches, part of which our interpreter translated as follows:—"My heart is strong.—You do

not hurt me.—You can't hurt me.—You are fools.
—You do not know how to torture.—Try it again.
—I don't feel any pain yet.—We torture your relations a great deal better, because we make them cry out loud, like little children.—You are not brave: you have small hearts, and you are always afraid to fight.” Then addressing one in particular, he said, “It was by my arrow *you* lost *your* eye;” upon which the Flat-head darted at him, and with a knife in a moment scooped out one of his eyes; at the same time cutting the bridge of his nose nearly in two. This did not stop him: with the remaining eye he looked sternly at another, and said, “I killed *your* brother, and I scalped your old fool of a father.” The warrior to whom this was addressed instantly sprung at him, and separated the scalp from his head. He was then about plunging a knife in his heart, until he was told by the chief to desist. The raw skull, bloody socket, and mutilated nose, now presented a horrific appearance, but by no means changed his tone of defiance.—“It was I,” said he to the chief, “that made your wife a prisoner last fall;

—we put out her eyes ;—we tore out her tongue ; we treated her like a dog. Forty of our young warriors——”

The chieftain became incensed the moment his wife's name was mentioned : he seized his gun, and, before the last sentence was ended, a ball from it passed through the brave fellow's heart, and terminated his frightful sufferings. Shocking, however, as this dreadful exhibition was, it was far exceeded by the atrocious cruelties practised on the female prisoners ; in which, I am sorry to say, the Flat-head women assisted with more savage fury than the men. I only witnessed part of what one wretched young woman suffered, a detail of which would be too revolting for publicity. We remonstrated against the exercise of such horrible cruelties. They replied by saying the Black-feet treated their relations in the same manner ; that it was the course adopted by all red warriors ; and that they could not think of giving up the gratification of their revenge to the foolish and womanish feelings of white men. Shortly after this we observed a young female led

forth, apparently not more than fourteen or fifteen years of age, surrounded by some old women, who were conducting her to one end of the village, whither they were followed by a number of young men. Having learned the infamous intentions of her conquerors, and feeling interested for the unfortunate victim, we renewed our remonstrances; but received nearly the same answer as before. Finding them still inflexible, and wishing to adopt every means in our power consistent with safety in the cause of humanity, we ordered our interpreter to acquaint them, that, highly as we valued their friendship, and much as we esteemed their furs, we would quit their country for ever, unless they discontinued their unmanly and disgraceful cruelties to their prisoners. This had the desired effect, and the miserable captive was led back to her sorrowing group of friends. Our interference was nearly rendered ineffectual by the furious reproaches of the infernal old priestesses who had been conducting her to the sacrifice. They told the young warriors they were cowards, fools, and had not the hearts of fleas; and called upon them in the names

of their mothers, sisters, and wives, to follow the steps of their forefathers, and have their revenge on the dogs of Black-feet. They began to waver ; but we affected not to understand what the old women had been saying. We told them that this act of self-denial on their part was peculiarly grateful to the white men ; and that by it they would secure our permanent residence among them, and in return for their furs be always furnished with guns and ammunition sufficient to repel the attacks of their old enemies, and preserve their relations from being made prisoners. This decided the doubtful ; and the chief promised faithfully that no more tortures should be inflicted on the prisoners, which I believe was rigidly adhered to, at least for that winter.

The Flat-heads were formerly much more numerous than they were at this period ; but owing to the constant hostilities between them and the Black-feet Indians, their numbers had been greatly diminished. While pride, policy, ambition, self-preservation, or the love of aggrandisement, often deluges the civilised world with Christian blood ; the only cause assigned by the

natives of whom I write, for their perpetual warfare, is their love of buffalo. There are extensive plains to the eastward of the mountains frequented in the summer and autumnal months by numerous herds of buffaloes. Hither the rival tribes repair to hunt those animals, that they may procure as much of their meat as will supply them until the succeeding season. In these excursions they often meet, and the most sanguinary conflicts follow.

The Black-feet lay claim to all that part of the country immediately at the foot of the mountains, which is most frequented by the buffalo; and allege that the Flat-heads, by resorting thither to hunt, are intruders whom they are bound to oppose on all occasions. The latter, on the contrary, assert, that their forefathers had always claimed and exercised the right of hunting on these "debateable lands;" and that while one of their warriors remained alive the right should not be relinquished. The consequences of these continual wars are dreadful, particularly to the Flat-heads, who, being the weaker in numbers, were generally the greater sufferers. Indepen-

dently of their inferiority in this respect, their enemy had another great advantage in the use of fire-arms, which they obtained from the Company's trading posts established in the department of Forts des Prairies. To these the Flat-heads had nothing to oppose but arrows and their own undaunted bravery. Every year previous to our crossing the mountains witnessed the gradual diminution of their numbers ; and total annihilation would shortly have been the consequence, but for our arrival with a plentiful supply of "villanous saltpetre." They were overjoyed at having an opportunity of purchasing arms and ammunition, and quickly stocked themselves with a sufficient quantity of both.

From this moment affairs took a decided change in their favour ; and in their subsequent contests the numbers of killed, wounded, and prisoners were more equal. The Black-feet became enraged at this, and declared to our people at Forts des Prairies, that all white men who might happen to fall into their hands, to the westward of the mountains, would be treated by them as enemies, in consequence of their furnishing the Flat-heads

with weapons, which were used with such deadly effect against their nation. This threat, as will appear hereafter, was strictly put in execution. The lands of the Flat-heads are well stocked with deer, mountain sheep, bears, wild fowl, and fish; and when we endeavoured to induce them to give up such dangerous expeditions, and confine themselves to the produce of their own country, they replied, that their fathers had always hunted on the buffalo grounds; that they were accustomed to do the same thing from their infancy; and they would not now abandon a practice which had existed for several generations among their people.

With the exception of the cruel treatment of their prisoners, (which, as it is general among all savages, must not be imputed to them as a peculiar vice,) the Flat-heads have fewer failings than any of the tribes I ever met with. They are honest in their dealings, brave in the field, quiet and amenable to their chiefs, fond of cleanliness, and decided enemies to falsehood of every description. The women are excellent wives and mothers, and their character for fidelity is so well

established, that we never heard an instance of one of them proving unfaithful to her husband. They are also free from the vice of backbiting, so common among the lower tribes; and laziness is a stranger among them. Both sexes are comparatively very fair, and their complexions are a shade lighter than the palest new copper after being freshly rubbed. They are remarkably well made, rather slender, and never corpulent. The dress of the men consists solely of long leggings, called *mittasses* by the Canadians, which reach from the ancles to the hips, and are fastened by strings to a leathern belt round the waist, and a shirt of dressed deer-skin, with loose hanging sleeves, which falls down to their knees. The outside seams of the leggings and shirt sleeves have fringes of leather. The women are covered by a loose robe of the same material reaching from the neck to the feet, and ornamented with fringes, beads, hawk-bells, and thimbles. The dresses of both are regularly cleaned with pipe-clay, which abounds in parts of the country; and every individual has two or three changes. They have no permanent covering for the head, but in

wet or stormy weather shelter it by part of a buffalo robe, which completely answers all the purposes of a surtout. The principal chief of the tribe is hereditary; but from their constant wars, they have adopted the wise and salutary custom of electing, as their leader in battle, that warrior in whom the greatest portion of wisdom, strength, and bravery are combined. The election takes place every year; and it sometimes occurs that the general in one campaign becomes a private in the next. This "war-chief," as they term him, has no authority whatever when at home, and is as equally amenable as any of the tribe to the hereditary chief; but when the warriors set out on their hunting excursions to the buffalo plains, he assumes the supreme command, which he exercises with despotic sway until their return. He carries a long whip with a thick handle decorated with scalps and feathers, and generally appoints two active warriors as *aides-de-camp*. On their advance towards the enemy he always takes the lead; and on their return he brings up the rear. Great regularity is preserved during the march; and I have been informed by Mr.

M'Donald, who accompanied some of these war parties to the field of action, that if any of the tribe fell out of the ranks, or committed any other breach of discipline, he instantly received a flagellation from the whip of the chieftain. He always acted with the most perfect impartiality, and would punish one of his subalterns for disobedience of orders with equal severity as any other offender. Custom, however, joined to a sense of public duty, had reconciled them to these arbitrary acts of power, which they never complained of or attempted to resent. After the conclusion of the campaign, on their arrival on their own lands, his authority ceases ; when the peace chief calls all the tribe together, and they proceed to a new election. There is no canvassing, caballing, or intriguing ; and should the last leader be superseded, he retires from office with apparent indifference, and without betraying any symptoms of discontent. The fighting chief at this period had been five times re-elected. He was about thirty-five years of age, and had killed twenty of the Black-feet in various battles, the scalps of whom were suspended in triumphal

pride from a pole at the door of his lodge. His wife had been captured by the enemy the year before, and her loss made a deep impression on him. He was highly respected by all the warriors for his superior wisdom and bravery; a consciousness of which, joined to the length of time he had been accustomed to command, imparted to his manners a degree of dignity which we never remarked in any other Indian. He would not take a second wife; and when the recollection of the one he had lost came across his mind, he retired into the deepest solitude of the woods to indulge his sorrow, where some of the tribe informed us they often found him calling on her spirit to appear, and invoking vengeance on her conquerors. When these bursts of grief subsided, his countenance assumed a tinge of stern melancholy, strongly indicating the mingled emotions of sorrow and unmitigated hatred of the Black-feet. We invited him sometimes to the fort, upon which occasions we sympathised with him on his loss; but at the same time acquainted him with the manner in which civilised nations made war. We told him that warriors only were made prisoners, who were

never tortured or killed, and that no brave white man would ever injure a female or a defenceless man ; that if such a custom had prevailed among them, he would now by the exchange of prisoners be able to recover his wife, who was by their barbarous system lost to him for ever ; and if it were impossible to bring about a peace with their enemies, the frightful horrors of war might at least be considerably softened by adopting the practice of Europeans. We added that he had now a glorious opportunity of commencing the career of magnanimity, by sending home uninjured the captives he had made during the last campaign ; that our friends on the other side of the mountains would exert their influence with the Black-feet to induce them to follow his example ; and that ultimately it might be the means of uniting the two rival nations in the bonds of peace. He was at first opposed to making any advances ; but on farther pressing he consented to make the trial, provided the hereditary chief and the tribe started no objections. On quitting us he made use of the following words : “ My white friends, you do not know the savage nature of the

Black-feet ; they hope to exterminate our tribe ; they are a great deal more numerous than we are ; and were it not for our bravery, their object would have been long ago achieved. We shall now, according to your wishes, send back the prisoners ; but remember, I tell you, that they will laugh at the interference of your relations beyond the mountains, and never spare a man, woman, or child, that they can take of our nation. Your exertions to save blood show you are good people. If they follow our example, we shall kill no more prisoners ; but I tell you, they will laugh at you and call you fools."

We were much pleased at having carried our point so far ; while he, true to his word, assembled the elders and warriors, to whom he represented the subject of our discourse, and after a long speech, advised them to make the trial, which would please their white friends, and show their readiness to avoid unnecessary cruelty. Such an unexpected proposition gave rise to an animated debate, which continued for some time ; but being supported by a man for whom they entertained so

much respect, it was finally carried ; and it was determined to send home the Black-feet on the breaking up of the winter. We undertook to furnish them with horses and provisions for their journey, or to pay the Flat-heads a fair price for so doing. This was agreed to, and about the middle of March the prisoners took their departure tolerably well mounted, and with dried meat enough to bring them to their friends. Mr. M'Millan, who had passed three years in their country, and was acquainted with their language, informed them of the exertions we had used to save their lives, and prevent farther repetitions of torture ; and requested them particularly to mention the circumstance to their countrymen, in order that they might adopt a similar proceeding. We also wrote letters by them to the gentlemen in charge of the different establishments at Forts des Prairies, detailing our success, and impressing on them the necessity of their attempting to induce the Black-feet in their vicinity to follow the example set them by the Flat-heads. The lands of this tribe present a pleasing diversity of woods

and plains, valleys and mountains, lakes and rivers. Besides the animals already mentioned, there are abundance of beavers, otters, martens, wolves, lynxes, &c.

The wolves of this district are very large and daring ; and were in great numbers in the immediate vicinity of the fort, to which they often approached closely for the purpose of carrying away the offals. We had a fine dog of mixed breed, whose sire was a native of Newfoundland, and whose dam was a wolf, which had been caught young, and domesticated by Mr. La Rocque, at Lac la Ronge, on the English River. He had many rencontres with his maternal tribe, in which he was generally worsted. On observing a wolf near the fort, he darted at it with great courage : if it was a male, he fought hard ; but if a female, he either allowed it to retreat harmless, or commenced fondling it. He sometimes was absent for a week or ten days ; and on his return, his body and neck appeared gashed with wounds inflicted by the tusks of his male rivals in their amorous encounters in the woods. He was a noble ani-

mal, but always appeared more ready to attack a wolf than a lynx.

Our stock of sugar and molasses having failed, we were obliged to have recourse to the extract of birch to supply the deficiency. This was obtained by perforating the trunks of the birch trees in different places. Small slips of bark were then introduced into each perforation, and underneath kettles were placed to receive the juice. This was afterwards boiled down to the consistency of molasses, and was used with our tea as a substitute for sugar: it is a bitter sweet, and answered its purpose tolerably well.

The Flat-heads are a healthy tribe, and subject to few diseases. Common fractures, caused by an occasional pitch off a horse, or a fall down a declivity in the ardour of hunting, are cured by tight bandages and pieces of wood like staves placed longitudinally around the part, to which they are secured by leathern thongs. For contusions they generally bleed, either in the temples, arms, wrists, or ancles, with pieces of sharp flint, or heads of arrows: they however preferred being

bled with the lancet, and frequently brought us patients, who were much pleased with that mode of operation. Very little snow fell after Christmas; but the cold was intense, with a clear atmosphere. I experienced some acute rheumatic attacks in the shoulders and knees, from which I suffered much annoyance. An old Indian proposed to relieve me, provided I consented to follow the mode of cure practised by him in similar cases on the young warriors of the tribe. On inquiring the method he intended to pursue, he replied that it merely consisted in getting up early every morning for some weeks, and plunging into the river, and to leave the rest to him. This was a most chilling proposition, for the river was firmly frozen, and an opening to be made in the ice preparatory to each immersion. I asked him, "Would it not answer equally well to have the water brought to my bed-room?" But he shook his head, and replied, he was surprised that a young white chief, who ought to be wise, should ask so foolish a question. On reflecting, however, that rheumatism was a stranger among Indians, while numbers of our people were mar-

tyrs to it, and, above all, that I was upwards of three thousand miles from any professional assistance, I determined to adopt the disagreeable expedient, and commenced operations the following morning. The Indian first broke a hole in the ice sufficiently large to admit us both, upon which he made a signal that all was ready. Enveloped in a large buffalo robe, I proceeded to the spot, and throwing off my covering, we both jumped into the frigid orifice together. He immediately commenced rubbing my shoulders, back, and loins: my hair in the mean time became ornamented with icicles; and while the lower joints were undergoing their friction, my face, neck, and shoulders were incased in a thin covering of ice. On getting released I rolled a blanket about me, and ran back to the bed-room, in which I had previously ordered a good fire, and in a few minutes I experienced a warm glow all over my body. Chilling and disagreeable as these matinal ablutions were, yet, as I found them so beneficial, I continued them for twenty-five days, at the expiration of which my physician was pleased to say that no more were necessary, and that I had

done my duty like a wise man. I was never after troubled with a rheumatic pain! One of our old Canadians, who had been labouring many years under a chronic rheumatism, asked the Indian if he could cure him in the same manner: the latter replied it was impossible, but that he would try another process. He accordingly constructed the skeleton of a hut about four and a half feet high, and three broad, in shape like a bee-hive, which he covered with deer-skins. He then heated some stones in an adjoining fire, and having placed the patient inside in a state of nudity, the hot stones were thrown in, and water poured on them: the entrance was then quickly closed, and the man kept in for some time until he begged to be released, alleging that he was nearly suffocated. On coming out he was in a state of profuse perspiration. The Indian ordered him to be immediately enveloped in blankets and conveyed to bed. This operation was repeated several times, and although it did not effect a radical cure, the violence of the pains was so far abated as to permit the patient to follow his ordinary business, and to enjoy his sleep in comparative ease.

The Flat-heads believe in the existence of a good and evil spirit, and consequently in a future state of rewards and punishments. They hold, that after death the good Indian goes to a country in which there will be perpetual summer ; that he will meet his wife and children ; that the rivers will abound with fish, and the plains with the much-loved buffalo ; and that he will spend his time in hunting and fishing, free from the terrors of war, or the apprehensions of cold or famine. The bad man, they believe, will go to a place covered with eternal snow ; that he will always be shivering with cold, and will see fires at a distance which he cannot enjoy ; water which he cannot procure to quench his thirst, and buffalo and deer which he cannot kill to appease his hunger. An impenetrable wood, full of wolves, panthers, and serpents, separates these “shrinking slaves of winter” from their fortunate brethren in the “meadows of ease.” Their punishment is not however eternal, and according to the different shades of their crimes they are sooner or later emancipated, and permitted to join their friends in the Elysian fields.

Their code of morality, although short, is comprehensive. They say that honesty, bravery, love of truth, attention to parents, obedience to their chiefs, and affection for their wives and children, are the principal virtues which entitle them to the place of happiness, while the opposite vices condemn them to that of misery. They have a curious tradition with respect to beavers. They firmly believe that these animals are a fallen race of Indians, who, in consequence of their wickedness, vexed the Good Spirit, and were condemned by him to their present shape ; but that in due time they will be restored to their humanity. They allege that the beavers have the powers of speech ; and that they have heard them talk with each other, and seen them sitting in council on an offending member.

The lovers of natural history are already well acquainted with the surprising sagacity of these wonderful animals ; with their dexterity in cutting down trees, their skill in constructing their houses, and their foresight in collecting and storing provisions sufficient to last them during the winter months : but few are aware, I should

imagine, of a remarkable custom among them, which, more than any other, confirms the Indians in believing them a fallen race. Towards the latter end of autumn a certain number, varying from twenty to thirty, assemble for the purpose of building their winter habitations. They immediately commence cutting down trees; and nothing can be more wonderful than the skill and patience which they manifest in this laborious undertaking; to see them anxiously looking up, watching the leaning of the tree when the trunk is nearly severed, and, when its creaking announces its approaching fall, to observe them scampering off in all directions to avoid being crushed.

When the tree is prostrate they quickly strip it of its branches; after which, with their dental chisels, they divide the trunk into several pieces of equal lengths, which they roll to the rivulet across which they intend to erect their house. Two or three old ones generally superintend the others; and it is no unusual sight to see them beating those who exhibit any symptoms of laziness. Should, however, any fellow be incorrigible, and persist in refusing to work, he is driven

unanimously by the whole tribe to seek shelter and provisions elsewhere. These outlaws are therefore obliged to pass a miserable winter, half starved in a burrow on the banks of some stream, where they are easily trapped. The Indians call them "lazy beaver," and their fur is not half so valuable as that of the other animals, whose persevering industry and *prévoyance* secure them provisions and a comfortable shelter during the severity of winter.

I could not discover why the *Black-feet* and *Flat-heads* received their respective designations; for the feet of the former are no more inclined to sable than any other part of the body, while the heads of the latter possess their fair proportion of roundness. Indeed it is only below the falls and rapids that real flat-heads appear, and at the mouth of the Columbia that they flourish most supernaturally.

Pierre Michel, the hunter, was the son of a respectable Canadian by an Indian mother. He also held the situation of interpreter, and was a most valuable servant of the Company. Michel accompanied the Flat-heads on two of their war campaigns, and by his unerring aim and undaunted

bravery won the affection of the whole tribe. The war chief in particular paid great attention to his opinion, and consulted him in any difficult matter. Michel wanted a wife; and having succeeded in gaining the affections of a handsome girl about sixteen years of age, and niece to the hereditary chieftain, he made a formal proposal for her. A council was thereupon called, at which her uncle presided, to take Michel's offer into consideration. One young warrior loved her ardently, and had obtained a previous promise from her mother that she should be his. He, therefore, with all his relations, strongly opposed her union with Pierre, and urged his own claims, which had been sanctioned by her mother. The war chief asked him if she had ever promised to become his wife: he replied in the negative. The chief then addressed the council, and particularly the lover, in favour of Michel's suit; pointing out the great services he had rendered the tribe by his bravery, and dwelling strongly on the policy of uniting him more firmly to their interests by consenting to the proposed marriage, which he said would for ever make him as one of their brothers. His influence

predominated, and the unsuccessful rival immediately after shook hands with Michel, and told the young woman, as he could not be her husband, he hoped she would always regard him as a brother. This she readily promised to do, and so ended the opposition. The happy Pierre presented a gun to her uncle, some cloth, calico, and ornaments to her female relatives; with a pistol and handsome dagger to his friend. He proceeded in the evening to the chief's lodge, where a number of her friends had assembled to smoke. Here she received a lecture from the old man, her mother, and a few other ancients, on her duty as a wife and mother. They strongly exhorted her to be chaste, obedient, industrious, and silent; and when absent with her husband among other tribes, always to stay at home, and have no intercourse with strange Indians. She then retired with the old women to an adjoining hut, where she underwent an ablution, and bade adieu to her leathern chemise, the place of which was supplied by one of gingham, to which was added a calico and green cloth petticoat, and a gown of blue cloth.

After this was over, she was conducted back to her uncle's lodge, when she received some farther advice as to her future conduct. A procession was then formed by the two chiefs, and several warriors carrying blazing flambeaux of cedar, to convey the bride and her husband to the fort. They began singing war songs in praise of Michel's bravery, and of their triumphs over the Black-feet. She was surrounded by a group of young and old women, some of whom were rejoicing, and others crying. The men moved on first, in a slow solemn pace, still chaunting their warlike epithalamium. The women followed at a short distance ; and when the whole party arrived in front of the fort, they formed a circle, and commenced dancing and singing, which they kept up about twenty minutes. After this the calumet of peace went round once more, and when the smoke of the last whiff had disappeared Michel shook hands with his late rival, embraced the chiefs, and conducted his bride to his room. While I remained in the country they lived happily together ; and as I mean to finish this chapter here,

I may as well state that he was the only person of our party to whom the Flat-heads would give one of their women in marriage. Several of our men made applications, but were always refused.

CHAPTER XII.

Effect of snow on the eyes—Description of a winter at Oakinagan—News from the sea—Capture of Astoria by the *Raccoon* sloop of war—Offer of Chinooks to cut off the British—A party attacked ; Mr. Stewart wounded ; two Indians killed—Arrival of Mr. Hunt—Shipwreck of the *Lark*—Massacre of Mr. Read and eight of his men—Extraordinary escape of Dorrien's widow and children.

ON the 4th of April, 1814, we took leave of our Flat-head friends, on our way to Spokane House, while they proceeded to make preparations for the ensuing summer's campaign. We pursued our route partly by land, and partly by water. In some places the snow had entirely disappeared ; but in others, particularly the dense forests, it was covered with a slight incrustation.

The sun was very hot, and where its rays were reflected from the congealed, or partly dissolved masses of snow, it caused a very painful sensation in the eyes of all, and nearly blinded half the party. My sight was partially injured, and my nose, lips, and cheeks, so severely scorched, that I did not recover from the effects for more than a month after. We arrived safely at Spokane House on the 15th, where I found a couple of letters which had been written to me by my friend M^cGillivray from Oakinagan, at which place he had wintered; but which, from want of a conveyance, could not be forwarded to me from Spokane. Although accustomed to the style of living on the eastern side of the mountains, and well acquainted with Indians, this was his first winter on the Columbia; and, for the information of some of my readers, I shall give an extract from one of his letters; viz.

“ Oakinagan, Feb. 1814.

“ This is a horribly dull place. Here I have been, since you parted from us, perfectly *solus*. My men, half Canadians and half Sandwich islanders. The library wretched, and no chance of my

own books till next year, when the Athabasca men cross the mountains. If you, or my friends at Spokane, do not send me a few volumes, I shall absolutely die of *ennui*. The Indians here are incontestably the most indolent rascals I ever met; and I assure you it requires no small degree of authority, with the few men I have, to keep them in order. Montignier left me on the 23d of December to proceed to Mr. M'Donald at Kamloops. On his way he was attacked by the Indians at Oakinagan Lake, and robbed of a number of his horses. The natives in that quarter seem to entertain no great friendship for us, as this is not their first attempt to trespass on our good-nature. My two Canadians were out hunting at the period of the robbery; and the whole of my household troops merely consisted of *Bonaparte! Washington!!* and *Cesar !!!* * Great names, you will say; but I must confess, that much as I think of the two great moderns, and highly as I respect the memory of the immortal *Julius*, among

* The individuals bearing these formidable names were merely three unsophisticated natives of the Sandwich Islands.

these thieving scoundrels ‘ a rose, by any other name, would smell as sweet.’ The snow is between two and three feet deep, and my trio of Owhyee generals find a sensible difference between such hyperborean weather and the pleasing sun-shine of their own tropical paradise. Poor fellows! They are not adapted for these latitudes, and I heartily wish they were at home in their own sweet islands, and sporting in the ‘ blue summer ocean ’ that surrounds them.

“ I have not as yet made a pack of beaver. The lazy Indians won’t work ; and as for the emperor, president, and dictator, they know as much about trapping as the monks of *La Trappe*. I have hitherto principally subsisted on horse-flesh. I cannot say it agrees with me, for it nearly produced a dysentery. I have had plenty of pork, rice, arrow-root, flour, taro-root, tea, and coffee ; no sugar. With such a variety of *bonnes choses* you will say I ought not to complain ; but want of society has destroyed my relish for luxuries, and the only articles I taste above *par* are sou-chong and molasses. What a contrast between the manner I spent last year and this! In the

first, with all the pride of a newly-created subaltern, occasionally fighting the Yankees, *à la mode du pays*; and anon, sporting my silver wings before some admiring *paysanne* along the frontiers. Then what a glorious winter in Montreal, with captured Jonathans, triumphant Britons, astonished Indians, gaping *habitans*, agitated beauties; balls, routs, dinners, suppers; parades, drums beating, colours flying, with all the other ‘pride, pomp, and circumstance of *glorious* war!’—but ‘Othello’s occupation’s gone!’ and here I am, with a shivering guard of poor islanders, buried in snow, sipping molasses, smoking tobacco, and masticating horse-flesh!—But I am sick of the contrast.”

On the 24th of April Messrs. David Stuart and Clarke arrived on horseback with three men. They informed us that they had left Fort George on the 4th in company with Mr. John George M'Tavish and the gentlemen lately belonging to the Pacific Fur Company, who were British subjects, and who were on their return home to Canada. They left the main party about a day's

march above Lewis River, for the purpose of procuring provisions at Spokane, with which they were to meet the canoes at the Kettle Falls, and from thence proceed up the Columbia on their route to Canada. The intelligence brought by these gentlemen was by no means of a pleasing description. At the period of their departure from the sea the Isaac Tod had not arrived, nor had any accounts been received of her. That vessel sailed from London in March 1813, in company with the Phœbe frigate and the Cherub and Racoon sloops of war. They arrived safe at Rio Janeiro, and thence proceeded round Cape Horn to the Pacific, having previously made arrangements to meet at Juan Fernandez. The three men-of-war reached the latter island after encountering dreadful gales about the Cape. They waited here some time for the arrival of the Isaac Tod ; but as she did not make her appearance, Commodore Hillier did not deem it prudent to remain any longer inactive. He, therefore, in company with the Cherub, proceeded in search of Commodore Porter, who, in the American frigate Essex, was clearing the South Sea of English whalers, and inflicting

other injuries of a serious nature on our commerce.*

At the same time he ordered Captain Black in the *Raccoon* to proceed direct to the *Columbia*, for the purpose of destroying the American establishment at Astoria. The *Raccoon* arrived at the *Columbia* on the 1st of December 1813. The surprise and disappointment of Captain Black and his officers were extreme on learning the arrangement that had taken place between the two companies, by which the establishment had become British property. They had calculated on obtaining a splendid prize by the capture of Astoria, the strength and importance of which had been much magnified;† and the contracting parties were therefore fortunate in having closed their bargain previous to the arrival of the *Raccoon*.

Captain Black however took possession of As-

* He shortly after met the *Essex* at Valparaiso, and after a severe contest captured her. She is now the convict hulk at Kingstown near Dublin.

† On looking at the wooden fortifications, Captain Black exclaimed, "Is this the fort about which I have heard so much? D—n me, but I'd batter it down in two hours with a four-pounder!"

toria in the name of his Britannic Majesty, and rebaptised it by the name of "Fort George." He also insisted on having an inventory taken of the valuable stock of furs, and all other property purchased from the American company, with a view to the adoption of ulterior proceedings in England for the recovery of the value from the North-west Company; but he subsequently relinquished this idea, and we heard no more about his claims. The Indians at the mouth of the Columbia knew well that Great Britain and America were distinct nations, and that they were then at war, but were ignorant of the arrangement made between Messrs. M'Dougall and M'Tavish, the former of whom still continued as nominal chief at the fort. On the arrival of the Racoon, which they quickly discovered to be one of "King George's fighting ships," they repaired armed to the fort, and requested an audience of Mr. M'Dougall. He was somewhat surprised at their numbers and warlike appearance, and demanded the object of such an unusual visit. Commonly, the principal chief of the Chinooks, thereupon addressed him in a long speech; in the

course of which he said that King George had sent a ship full of warriors, and loaded with nothing but big guns to take the Americans, and make them all slaves; and that as they (the Americans) were the first white men who settled in their country, and treated the Indians like good relations, they had resolved to defend them from King George's warriors, and were now ready to conceal themselves in the woods close to the wharf, from whence they would be able with their guns and arrows to shoot all the men that should attempt to land from the English boats; while the people in the fort could fire at them with their big guns and rifles. This proposition was uttered with an earnestness of manner that admitted no doubt of its sincerity: two armed boats from the *Raccoon* were approaching; and had the people in the fort felt disposed to accede to the wishes of the Indians, every man in them would have been destroyed by an invisible enemy. Mr. M'Dougall thanked them for their friendly offer; but added that, notwithstanding the nations were at war, the people in the boats would not injure him or any of his people, and therefore

requested them to 'throw by their war-shirts and arms, and receive the strangers as their friends. They at first seemed astonished at this answer; but on assuring them in the most positive manner that he was under no apprehensions, they consented to give up their weapons for a few days. They afterwards declared they were sorry for having complied with Mr. M'Dougall's wishes; for when they observed Captain Black surrounded by his officers and marines, break the bottle of port on the flag-staff, and hoist the British ensign after changing the name of the fort, they remarked that, however we might wish to conceal the fact, the Americans were undoubtedly made slaves; and they were not convinced of their mistake until the sloop of war had departed without taking any prisoners.

Mr. Stuart farther informed us, that a party of seventeen men under the command of Messrs. James Keith and Alexander Stewart, which had left Fort George early in January with merchandise for the interior, had been attacked by the natives between the first and second portages of the first rapids; that Mr. Stewart was danger-

ously wounded by two arrows, one of which entered his left shoulder, and the other penetrated between his ribs close to the heart, notwithstanding which he succeeded in shooting two of the savages dead. By this time some of the men came to his assistance, and for a while succeeded in keeping back their assailants, who every moment became more daring, and evinced not merely a determination to revenge the death of their countrymen, but to seize and carry away all the merchandise in the portage. Mr. Keith having observed a large reinforcement of the savages from the opposite side approach in their war-canoes, to join those by whom Mr. Stewart was surrounded, and seeing that gentleman's wounds bleeding profusely, felt that it would have been foolish obstinacy, and would have produced an unnecessary sacrifice of lives to remain longer in such a dangerous situation. He therefore determined to abandon the goods ; and having embarked Mr. Stewart, the whole party pushed off in one canoe, leaving the other, with all the property, to the mercy of the Indians. The latter were so overjoyed at becoming masters of such an

unexpected quantity of plunder, that they allowed the party to effect their retreat unmolested; and on the second day the canoe reached Fort George.

Among the goods thus abandoned were upwards of fifty guns, and a considerable quantity of ammunition, which, if allowed to remain in the hands of the savages, might have been turned against us on a future occasion; and as this was the first attack which had proved successful, the proprietors at once determined not to allow it to pass with impunity. They accordingly sent Mr. Franchère to the principal friendly chiefs in the vicinity of the fort for the purpose of acquainting them with the late occurrence, and inviting them to join our people in their intended expedition against the enemy. They readily consented, and on the following morning a brigade of six canoes, containing sixty-two men, under the command of Messrs. M'Tavish, Keith, Franchère, Matthews, &c. took their departure from Fort George.

Having no lading, they quickly reached the rapids. Every thing there appeared hostile. The

warriors lined the beach at different places well armed, and the old men, women, and children were invisible. A council of war was immediately held, at which two chiefs of the Clatsops (one of whom was an old female) were present. They advised the gentlemen to assume the appearance of friendship; and after entering into a parley with the natives, and inviting them to smoke, to seize one of their chiefs, and detain him as a hostage until the property should be restored. This advice was followed, and succeeded to perfection. Having by some coaxing, and repeated offers of the calumet, collected a number of the natives about them, to whom they made trifling presents of tobacco, they were at length joined by the principal chief of the place, who had for some time cautiously kept out of view. He was instantly seized, bound hand and foot, and thrown into a tent, with two men to guard him armed with drawn swords. The others were then sent away, with directions to acquaint their countrymen of their chief's captivity, and were told that if the entire of the property was not forthwith restored, he should be put to death. This had the

desired effect, and shortly after all the guns, part of the kettles, and nearly one half of the other goods were brought back. They declared they could not recover any more, and asked our gentlemen, "would they not allow them any thing to place over the dead bodies of their two relations, who had been killed by Mr. Stewart?"

The most important object of the expedition having been thus attained without bloodshed, and as the aggressors had been pretty severely punished in the first instance, the party deemed it both humane and prudent to rest satisfied with what they had recovered. They also felt that an unnecessary waste of human blood might prove ultimately prejudicial to their own interests, by raising up a combined force of natives, against whom their limited numbers would find it impossible to contend. They therefore gave the chief his liberty, and presented him with a flag, telling him at the same time, that whenever that was presented to them unfurled they would consider it as a sign of friendship; but that if any of his tribe ever approached them without displaying this emblem of peace, it would be taken as a

symptom of hostility, and treated as such. The chief promised faithfully to abide by this engagement, and the parties then separated.

Mr. Hunt, late of the Pacific Fur Company, arrived at Fort George early in February, this year, in a brig which he had purchased at the Sandwich Islands. When the Beaver had left the Columbia, this gentleman embarked in her on a trading voyage to the northward, which proved very successful. At the termination of her northern trip the season was too far advanced to permit her returning to the Columbia, in consequence of which Mr. Hunt sent her on to Canton, and embarked on board an American trading vessel on the coast. Shortly after the unwelcome intelligence of the war reached him; and finding no vessel bound for the Columbia, he proceeded in the trader to the Sandwich Islands. He did not remain long here, when he re-embarked on board another trader, and after traversing an immense space of the Pacific Ocean, in the course of which he encountered many dangers, returned again to the islands. At Whoahoo he purchased a brig called the Pedler, and was preparing to come in her to

the Columbia, when he was informed by some of the natives that an American vessel had been wrecked on the island of Tahoorowa. He instantly repaired thither, and found Captain Northrop, late commander of the ship Lark, with several of his crew, all in a state of great destitution. The Lark had been despatched from New York by Mr. Astor, freighted with provisions and merchandise for the establishment at the Columbia. After escaping various British cruisers, she made an excellent passage, until she arrived within about three hundred miles of the Sandwich Islands, when a sudden squall threw her on her beam ends. By this unfortunate accident the second mate and four men perished. The captain, however, and the rest of the crew, by cutting away the masts, succeeded in righting her; but she was completely water-logged. With much difficulty they hoisted a sail on a small jury foremast. They fortunately got out of the cabin a box containing a few dozen of wine; on which, with the raw flesh of a shark they had caught, they supported nature thirteen days! At the end of this period the trade-winds, which had been for some time

favourable, drove the vessel on the rocky coast of Tahoorowa, where she went to pieces. The captain and his surviving crew were saved and kindly treated by the natives, who however plundered the wreck of all the property they could find.

Mr. Hunt took Captain Northrop and his men on board the brig, and sailed forthwith for the Columbia, which he reached in the beginning of February. Being ignorant of the events that had occurred during his absence, he was confounded at the intelligence he received; and censured in strong terms the precipitate manner in which the sale had been effected. It was, however, irrevocable, and he was obliged to submit.

Having no farther business at Fort George, Mr. Hunt determined on returning to the United States without loss of time. He took on board such American citizens as preferred returning home by sea to crossing the continent, and after rather a tedious voyage they all arrived safely at New York.*

* Mr. Hunt subsequently returned to St. Louis, at the entrance of the Missouri, in which neighbourhood he possessed extensive property, and from accounts which I have recently

We also learned from Messrs. Stuart and Clarke the following melancholy intelligence :—On their way up, a few miles above the Wallah Wallah river, they were followed by some Indian canoes, from one of which a voice hailed them in French, and requested them to stop. They accordingly put ashore, and were joined by the Indians, among whom they were surprised to find the widow of Pierre Dorrien, (a half-bred hunter, who had accompanied Mr. Read to the country of the Shoshonés the preceding autumn, as already mentioned,) with her two children. She told them, that shortly after Mr. Read had built his house she proceeded, with her husband and two other hunters, named Peznor and Le Clerc, between four and five days' march from the post to a part of the country well stocked with beaver, of which they succeeded in trapping a considerable quantity. One evening about the beginning of January, while the poor fellows were thus occupied, Le Clerc staggered into her hut mortally wounded.

received, I feel pleasure in stating, has been elevated to the important office of governor of the state. A more estimable individual could not be selected for the situation.

He had merely strength sufficient to acquaint her that the savages had suddenly fallen on them while they were at their traps, and had killed her husband and Peznor:—he was then proceeding to give her directions as to the best means of effecting her escape; but ere he had concluded, death terminated his existence.

With that courage and self-possession of which few Indian women are devoid in times of necessity, she at once determined on flying from a spot so dangerous. With considerable difficulty she succeeded in catching two horses. On one she placed her clothes, a small quantity of dried salmon, and some beaver meat which remained in the hut. She mounted on the other with her two children, the elder of whom was only three years old, and the other did not exceed four months. Thus provided, she commenced her journey towards Mr. Read's establishment. On the third day she observed a number of Indians on horse-back galloping in an easterly direction: she immediately dismounted with the children, and was fortunate enough to escape unnoticed. That night she slept without fire or water. Late in the even-

ing of the fourth day, on which she expected to have arrived at Mr. Read's house, she came in sight of the spot on which it had stood ; but was horror-struck at beholding there only a smoking ruin, with fresh marks of blood scattered all around. Her fortitude, however, did not forsake her, and she determined to ascertain whether any of the party were still living.

Having concealed the children and horses in an adjoining cluster of trees, she armed herself with a tomahawk and a large knife, and after night-fall she cautiously crept towards the scene of carnage. All was silent and lonely, and at every step fresh traces of blood met her view. Anxious to ascertain if any had escaped the massacre, she repeatedly called out the various names of the party, but no voice responded. By the expiring glare of the smouldering timbers she observed a band of prairie wolves engaged in a sanguinary banquet. The sound of her voice scared them, and they fled. Fearful that they might bend their way to the spot in which she had deposited her precious charge, she hastened thither,

and arrived just in time to save her children from three of those ferocious animals which were then approaching them.

From thence she proceeded the following morning towards a range of mountains not far from the upper parts of the Wallah Wallah river, where she intended to remain the rest of the winter. This place she reached on the next day in a state of great exhaustion from the want of food. Fortunately she had a buffalo robe and two or three deer skins, with which, aided by some pine bark and cedar branches, she constructed a wigwam that served to shelter her tolerably well from the inclemency of the weather. The spot she chose was a rocky recess close by a mountain spring. She was obliged to kill the two horses for food, the meat of which she smoke-dried, and the skins served as an additional covering to her frail habitation. In this cheerless and melancholy solitude the wretched widow and her two poor orphans dragged on a miserable existence during a severe season. Towards the latter end of March she had nearly consumed the last of her horse-

flesh, in consequence of which she found it necessary to change her quarters. During the whole of this period she saw none of the natives, or any indication of human habitations. Having packed up as much covering and dried meat as she could carry, she placed it with her younger child on her back, and taking the elder by the hand, she bade adieu to her wintry encampment. After crossing the ridge of mountains she fell on the Wallah Wallah river, along the banks of which she continued until she arrived at its junction with the Columbia. Her reception and treatment by the tribe at that place was of the most cordial and hospitable description; and she had been living with them about a fortnight when the canoes passed, and took her up to Oakinagan.

The house that had been built by Mr. Read had no paling or defence of any kind; and as the men were constantly out hunting, or procuring provisions, she supposed he had not more than one or two with him at the time they were attacked, and that the others had been cut off in the same manner as her husband and his compa-

nions. She could not assign any reason for this butchery, and up to the period I quitted the country the cause of it was never satisfactorily ascertained. Some imagined that it was committed by the tribe to which the man belonged that had been hanged by Mr. Clarke, in revenge for his death ; but this could not have been the case ; for, leaving the policy or impolicy of that execution out of the question, we subsequently learned that his tribe inhabited the upper parts of Lewis River, and never crossed the mountains beyond which Mr. Read had formed his establishment.

From the quantity of blood Dorrien's widow saw, she thinks that several of the savages must have been killed or wounded before their bloodthirsty efforts were crowned with such fatal success.

Mr. Read was a rough, warm-hearted, brave, old Irishman. Owing to some early disappointments in life he had quitted his native country while a young man, in search of wealth among regions

Where beasts with man divided empire claim,
And the brown Indian marks with murd'rous aim ;

and after twenty-five years of toils, dangers, and privations, added another victim to the long list of those who have fallen sacrifices to Indian treachery.

CHAPTER XIII.

Arrival of the Isaac Tod—Miss Jane Barnes, a white woman
—Murder of one of our men by Indians—Trial and execution of the murderers—Death of Mr. Donald M'Tavish and five men.

WE left Spokane House on the 25th of May, and reached Oakinagan on the 29th, where I found my disconsolate friend, the ex-subaltern, just recovering from the melancholy into which his hibernal solitude had thrown him. The different parties having now assembled, we all started for the sea on the 30th of May, and on the 11th of June arrived at Fort George. We were highly gratified at finding the so long expected Isaac Tod safe at anchor. After parting company with the men-of-war off Cape Horn,

she touched at Juan Fernandez and the Gallipagos Islands, from whence she proceeded to Monterey, a Spanish settlement on the coast of California, for provisions. Here the captain was informed that a British man-of-war had put into San Francisco in distress, and was unable to leave it. This latter place is also a Spanish establishment, and is situate in Lat. 38° N., about two degrees to the southward of Monterey. Captain Smith of the Isaac Tod immediately proceeded thither, and found the vessel alluded to was the Racoon sloop of war, commanded by Captain Black. This vessel, on quitting the Columbia, struck several times on the bar, and was so severely damaged in consequence, that she was obliged to make for San Francisco, which port she reached in a sinking state, with seven feet water in her hold. Finding it impossible to procure the necessary materials there to repair the damage, Captain Black and his officers had determined to abandon the vessel, and proceed overland to the Gulf of Mexico, whence they could have obtained a passage to England; but when the Isaac Tod arrived they succeeded, with her as-

sistance, in stopping the leaks, and putting the Racoon in good sailing order ; after which the Isaac Tod weighed anchor, and on the 17th of April crossed the bar of the Columbia, after a voyage of thirteen months from England.

She brought out the following passengers ; viz. Messrs. Donald M'Tavish and John M'Donald, proprietors ; and Messrs. Alexander and James M'Tavish, Alexander Frazer, and Alexander M'Kenzie, clerks, with Doctor Swan, a medical gentleman engaged as resident physician at the fort.

The two first-named gentlemen, from their long experience of Indian living, knew well the little luxuries that would be most grateful to men so long debarred from the enjoyments of civilised life ; and they accordingly brought out a few casks of bottled porter, some excellent cheese, and a quantity of prime English beef, which they had dressed and preserved in a peculiar manner in tin cases impervious to air ; so that we could say we ate fresh beef which had been killed and dressed in England thirteen months before ! Acceptable as were these refreshers to our memory

of “lang syne,” they brought out another object which more strongly recalled to our semi-barbarised ideas the thoughts of our “dear native home,” than all the other *bonnes choses* contained in the vessel. This was neither more nor less than a flaxen-haired blue-eyed daughter of Albion, who, in a temporary fit of erratic enthusiasm, had consented to become *le compagnon du voyage* of Mr. Mac——. Miss Jane Barnes had been a lively bar-maid at an hotel in Portsmouth, at which Mr. Mac—— had stopped preparatory to his embarkation. This gentleman, being rather of an amorous temperament, proposed the trip to Miss Jane, who, “nothing loth,” threw herself on his protection, regardless of consequences, and after encountering the perils of a long sea voyage, found herself an object of interest to the residents at the fort, and the greatest curiosity that ever gratified the wondering eyes of the blubber-loving aboriginals of the north-west coast of America. The Indians daily thronged in numbers to our fort for the mere purpose of gazing on, and admiring the fair beauty, every article of whose dress was examined with the most minute

scrutiny. She had rather an extravagant wardrobe, and each day exhibited her in a new dress, which she always managed in a manner to display her figure to the best advantage. One day, her head, decorated with feathers and flowers, produced the greatest surprise ; the next, her hair, braided and unconcealed by any covering, excited equal wonder and admiration. The young women felt almost afraid to approach her, and the old were highly gratified at being permitted to touch her person. Some of the chiefs having learned that her protector intended to send her home, thought to prevent such a measure by making proposals of marriage. One of them in particular, the son of Comcomly, the principal chief of the Chinooks, came to the fort attired in his richest dress, his face fancifully bedaubed with red paint, and his body redolent of whale oil. He was young, and had four native wives. He told her, that if she would become his wife, he would send one hundred sea-otters to her relations ; that he would never ask her to carry wood, draw water, dig for roots, or hunt for provisions ; that he would make her mistress over his other wives, and permit her

to sit at her ease from morning to night, and wear her own clothes;* that she should always have abundance of fat salmon, anchovies, and elk, and be allowed to smoke as many pipes of tobacco during the day as she thought proper; together with many other flattering inducements, the tithe of which would have shaken the constancy of a score of the chastest brown vestals that ever flourished among the lower tribes of the Columbia.

These tempting offers, however, had no charms for Jane. Her long voyage had not yet eradicated certain Anglican predilections respecting mankind, which she had contracted in the country of her birth, and among which she did not include a flat head, a half-naked body, or a copper-coloured skin besmeared with whale oil.

Her native innamorato made several other ineffectual proposals; but finding her inflexible, he declared he would never more come near the fort while she remained there. We shortly afterwards learned that he had concerted a plan with some daring young men of his tribe to carry her off

* Meaning that he would not insist on her wearing the light covering of the Indian females.

while she was walking on the beach, (her general custom every evening while the gentlemen were at dinner,) a practice which, after this information, she was obliged to discontinue.

Mr. Mac—— at first intended to have brought her with him across the continent to Montreal ; but on learning the impracticability of her performing such an arduous journey, he abandoned that idea, and made arrangements with the captain for her return to England by way of Canton. A few words more, and I shall have done with Miss Barnes. On the arrival of the vessel at Canton she became an object of curiosity and admiration among the inhabitants of the “ Celestial Empire.” An English gentleman of great wealth, connected with the East-India Company, offered her a splendid establishment. It was infinitely superior to any of the proposals made by the Chinook nobility, and far beyond any thing she could ever expect in England : it was therefore prudently accepted, and the last account I heard of her stated that she was then enjoying all the luxuries of eastern magnificence.*

* Miss Barnes was fond of quotations ; but she was no *Blue*.

About a month after the arrival of the Isaac Tod a circumstance occurred which, as it caused a considerable sensation for some time, I shall fully relate.

About two miles at the rear of the fort, on the Clatsop River, a place had been established for making charcoal. One of the men employed at

One of the clerks was one day defending the native and half-bred women, whose characters she had violently attacked, and he recriminated in no very measured language on the conduct of the white ladies: "O Mr. Mac!" said she, "I suppose you agree with *Shakspeare* that "Every woman is at heart a rake?"—"Pope, ma'am, if you please."—"Pope! Pope!" replied Jane. "Bless me, sir! you must be wrong; *rake* is certainly the word.—I never heard of but one female *Pope*." Then, in order to terminate the argument, she pretended to read an old newspaper which she held in her hand. He quickly discovered by her keeping the wrong end uppermost that she did not know a syllable of its contents. He quitted her abruptly; and as he was coming out I met him at the door, a wicked and malicious grin ruffling his sun-burnt features. "Well, Mac," said I, "what's the matter? You seem annoyed."—"What do you think?" he replied, "I have just had a conversation with that fine-looking damsel there, who looks down with such contempt on our women, and may I be d—d if the b—h understands B from a buffalo!"

Her supposed education was the only excuse in his opinion to justify her usurpation of superiority;—that gone, he judged her "poor indeed."

this business was a poor half-witted American from Boston, named Judge, who had crossed the continent with Mr. Hunt's party, and whose sufferings during that journey had partially deranged his intellect. He was however a capital woodsman; and few men could compete with him, as he said himself, in hewing down forests "by the acre." His comrade had been absent one day selecting proper wood for charcoal, and on returning to the lodge in the evening he found the body of the unfortunate Judge lying stretched on the ground, with his skull completely cleft in two by the blow of an axe which was lying beside him steeped in blood. He instantly repaired to the fort, and communicated the dreadful intelligence; upon which a party was despatched for the mangled remains of poor Judge.

Mr. M'Tavish forthwith summoned all the neighbouring chiefs to attend at the fort; and on the following day there was a congress of representatives from the Chinooks, Chilts, Clatsops, Killymucks, and Cathlamahs. They could not assign any reason for the murder; nor indeed could any one, for Judge was the most harmless

individual belonging to our establishment. They promised, however, that every exertion should be made on their part for the discovery of the perpetrators; and Mr. M'Tavish offered a large reward for their apprehension. Some time elapsed in vain inquiry; but, through the agency of the Clatsop chief, we received private information that the murderers were two of the Killymucks, and that if we sent a party well armed to his village, he would render every assistance to take them into custody. Mr. Matthews and seven men were accordingly ordered on this dangerous duty. They proceeded early in the day in a canoe up the Clatsop River, as if on a hunting excursion, and stopped late in the evening at a place previously agreed on, where they were joined by three Clatsops and a Killymuck, who was the informer. After night-fall they continued on until they arrived at the Killymuck village, when they landed. The informer having pointed out the lodges in which the murderers slept, and told their names, separated from the party. Mr. Matthews immediately proceeded to the chief's dwelling, and made him acquainted

with the object of his visit. He appeared somewhat surprised ; but stated, that having promised to assist in discovering them, he would not oppose their apprehension, provided they were allowed a fair trial, and that nothing should befall them but on the clearest testimony. This was of course agreed to ; and Mr. Matthews, with his party, then cautiously approached the habitations of the two delinquents, which were adjoining each other ; and having divided his men, leaving the Clatsops to mind the canoe, they entered the houses, and succeeded in seizing, binding, and hurrying the prisoners on board before the village was alarmed. The men paddled hard until they arrived at the Clatsop village, where they stopped to rest, and the following morning at day-break they reached Fort George in safety. The day subsequent to that of our arrival was fixed for the trial. It was held in the large dining-hall ; and the jury was composed of the gentlemen belonging to the Company, with an equal number of Indians, consisting of chiefs and chieftainesses, for among these tribes old women possess great authority. It appeared in the course of the investigation that

revenge was the cause of the murder. About two years before this period, while houses were being built for the men, the greater number of them were lodged in tents and huts about the fort, from which the Indians were constantly in the practice of pilfering whatever they could lay their hands on ; particularly at night, when the workmen were buried in sleep after the labour of the day.

Judge and three others were lodged together ; and one night, when it was supposed they were fast asleep, one of them heard the noise of footsteps outside approaching the tent. Through a slit in the canvass he ascertained they were natives, and without awaking his comrades, he cautiously unsheathed his sword, and waited a few minutes in silence, watching their motions, until they at length reached the tent, the lower part of which they were in the act of raising, when, by a desperate blow of the sword, he severely cut one of their arms. The savage gave a dreadful yell, and the Canadian rushed out, when he distinctly perceived two Indians running away quickly, and disappear in the gloom of the forest behind. This

circumstance made some noise at the time ; the parties were not discovered, and in a few weeks the event was forgotten by our people ; but it was not so with the savages. They harboured the most deep and deadly revenge ; and thinking that Judge was the person who had inflicted the wound, they determined to wreak their vengeance on him. For this purpose they had been for nearly two years occasionally lurking about the fort, until the fatal opportunity presented itself of gratifying their demoniacal passion. On the day of the murder, after Judge's comrade had quitted the lodge, they stole unperceived on him, and while he was engaged at the fire they felled him to the ground with a blow of his own axe, after which they split his skull, and made their escape. All these facts were brought out during the trial, which lasted the greater part of the day. Several of the witnesses underwent a strict cross-examination, particularly by the old women, who evinced much more acuteness than was displayed by the chiefs.

The prisoners made no defence, and observed a sulky taciturnity during the whole of the proceed-

ings. They were found guilty by the unanimous verdict of the jury, and sentenced to be shot the following morning. They showed no signs of repentance or sorrow; and on being led out of the hall, the fellow whose arm had been cut held it up, and exclaimed, "Were I now free, and he alive, I would do the same thing again!"

About nine o'clock the next morning they were brought from the guard-house pinioned, and conducted to the farther end of the wharf, at which place it was arranged they were to suffer. Twenty-four men were selected by ballot to carry the dreadful sentence into execution under the command of Mr. M——, to whom the lot fell. Immense numbers of Indians belonging to the various surrounding nations were in attendance; some on shore, and others in canoes. The guns on the battery and in the bastions were loaded with grape, and attended by men with slow matches. The remainder of our people were drawn up in front of the fort, all armed with muskets and bayonets. The culprits made considerable opposition to their being tied together, and refused to kneel, or allow the caps to be drawn over their

eyes. At length, between force and entreaty, these preliminaries were accomplished, and orders were given to fire. After the discharge a loud and frightful yell was sent forth from the surrounding savages; but they remained tranquil. On the smoke clearing away, it was perceived that both the unfortunate men were still alive, although several balls had taken effect. Mr. M—— ordered the party to reload quickly, and a second volley was discharged: one only was killed; and as the other made repeated attempts to rise, and appeared to suffer great agony, he was despatched by one of the men, who fired a ball through his head. The party then gave three cheers, and retired to the fort, while the friends and relatives of the deceased took away their bodies amidst the greatest lamentations; during which not a murmur was heard, or the slightest symptom of disapprobation expressed. Shortly after a number of the chiefs and elders came up to the fort, when Mr. M'Tavish invited them into the hall, to thank them for their assistance; and having paid the promised rewards, and made various presents, they smoked the calumet of

peace, and departed for their respective villages, apparently much gratified with the manner they had been treated.

Scarcely was this tragedy ended when one more fatal to the interests of the Company occurred by the melancholy and untimely death of Mr. Donald M'Tavish. This gentleman had embarked in an open boat, with six *voyageurs*, to proceed to the opposite side of the Columbia. It blew a stiff gale; and about the middle of the river, owing to some mismanagement of the sail, a heavy wave struck the boat, which instantly filled and went down. With the exception of one man, they all perished: he succeeded in gaining a snag which was a few feet above the water, and on which he remained for nearly two hours, until he was rescued when in a state of great exhaustion by two Chinooks, who proceeded to his assistance in a small canoe. Thus perished the respected Mr. Donald M'Tavish, one of the oldest proprietors of the North-west Company, and for many years the principal director for managing the affairs of the interior. He had realised an independent fortune; and had, in fact, retired from

the Company, when he volunteered his services to organise the new department of Columbia ; after effecting which object it was his intention to have crossed the continent to Canada, and from thence to proceed to Scotland, where he had purchased an estate, on which, after a life of fatigues and hardships, he had hoped to spend an old age of ease and comfort. Mr. M'Tavish was a man of bold, decided character. His enmity was open and undisguised ; his friendship warm and sincere. Sprung from a comparatively humble origin, he was the founder of his own fortune ; and merit with him was sure to be appreciated without reference to a man's family or connexions.

The day after this melancholy event the body of the lamented gentleman, with those of four of the men, were found, and interred in a handsome spot behind the north-east bastion of Fort George, where a small monument, tolerably well engraved, points to the future Indian trader the last earthly remains of the enterprising Donald M'Tavish.

CHAPTER XIV.

Sketch of the Indians about the mouth of the Columbia—Process of flattening the head—Thievish disposition—Treatment of their slaves—Suggestions to the missionary societies—Dreadful ravages of the small-pox—Jack Ramsay—Their ideas of religion—Curious superstition—Marriage ceremonies—Anecdote—Aversion to ardent spirits—Government—War—Arms and Armour—Canoes and houses—System of cooking—Utensils—Gambling—*Haiqua*—Quack doctors—Mode of burial.

1814.

WE remained a couple of months this summer at Fort George, making the necessary arrangements for our winter's campaign. During this period we made several excursions on pleasure or business to the villages of the various tribes, from one to three days' journey from the fort. They differ little from each other in laws, manners, or

customs, and were I to make a distinction, I would say the Cathlamahs are the most tranquil, the Killymucks the most roguish, the Clatsops the most honest, and the Chinooks the most incontinent. The Chilts, a small tribe who inhabit the coast to the northward of Cape Disappointment, partake in some degree of these various qualities. The abominable custom of flattening their heads prevails among them all. Immediately after birth the infant is placed in a kind of oblong cradle formed like a trough, with moss under it. One end, on which the head reposes, is more elevated than the rest. A padding is then placed on the forehead with a piece of cedar-bark over it, and by means of cords passed through small holes on each side of the cradle the padding is pressed against the head. It is kept in this manner upwards of a year, and is not I believe attended with much pain. The appearance of the infant, however, while in this state of compression, is frightful, and its little black eyes, forced out by the tightness of the bandages, resemble those of a mouse choked in a trap. When released from this inhuman process, the head is perfectly flat-

tened, and the upper part of it seldom exceeds an inch in thickness. It never afterwards recovers its rotundity. They deem this an essential point of beauty, and the most devoted adherent of our first Charles never entertained a stronger aversion to a *Round-head* than these savages.*

They allege, as an excuse for this custom, that all their slaves have round heads; and accordingly every child of a bondsman, who is not adopted by the tribe, inherits not only his father's degradation, but his parental rotundity of cranium.

This deformity is unredeemed by any peculiar beauty either in features or person. The height of the men varies from five feet to five feet six inches; that of the women is generally six or eight inches less. The nose is rather flat, with distended nostrils; and a mouth, seldom closed, exposes to view an abominable set of short dirty irregular teeth. The limbs of the men are in general well-shaped; but the women, owing to tight ligatures

* Doctor Swan, on examining the skulls I had taken, candidly confessed that nothing short of ocular demonstration could have convinced him of the possibility of moulding the human head into such a form.

which they wear on the lower part of the legs, are quite bandy, with thick ankles, and broad flat feet. They have loose hanging breasts, slit ears, and perforated noses, which, added to greasy heads, and bodies saturated with fish-oil, constitute the sum total of their personal attractions.

The good qualities of these Indians are few; their vices many. Industry, patience, sobriety and ingenuity nearly comprise the former; while in the latter may be classed, thieving, lying, incontinence, gambling, and cruelty. They are also perfect hypocrites. Each tribe accuses the other of "envy, hatred, malice, and all uncharitableness." Even the natives of the same village, while they feign an outward appearance of friendship, indulge in a certain propensity called back-biting; in this respect differing but little from the inhabitants of more civilised countries, among whom the prevalence of such ill-natured practices has by certain envious and satirical coffee-drinkers been unjustly attributed to the scandalising influence of tea.

Their bravery is rather doubtful; but what they want in courage they make up in effrontery. Fear

alone prevents them from making any open or violent attempt at robbery; and their offences under this head, in legal parlance, may more strictly be styled petty larcenies. I have seen a fellow stopped on suspicion of stealing an axe. He denied the charge with the most barefaced impudence; and when the stolen article was pulled from under his robe, instead of expressing any regret, he burst out laughing, and alleged he was only joking. One of the men gave him a few kicks, which he endured with great *sang-froid*; and on joining his companions, they received him with smiling countenances, and bantered him on the failure of his attempt. They seldom make any resistance to these summary punishments; and if the chastisement takes place in the presence of a chief, he seems delighted at the infliction.

They purchase slaves from the neighbouring tribes for beaver, otter, beads, &c. I could never learn whether any were taken by them in war. While in good health, and able to work, they are well treated; but the moment they fall sick, or become unfit for labour, the unfortunate slaves are totally neglected, and left to perish in the most

miserable manner. After death their bodies are thrown without any ceremony at the trunk of a tree, or into an adjoining wood. It sometimes happens that a slave is adopted by a family ; in which case he is permitted to marry one of the tribe, and his children, by undergoing the flattening process, melt down into the great mass of the community.

Chastity is an item seldom inscribed on the credit side of their account current with futurity. Indeed a strict observance of it before marriage is not an article of their moral code.

Formerly an act of post-nuptial incontinence subjected the woman to the loss of life ; but in latter times infractions of conjugal rights are often connived at, or if committed *sans permission*, only slightly punished.*

Numbers of the women reside during certain periods of the year in small huts about the fort, from which it is difficult to keep the men. They generally retire with the fall of the leaf to their

* We were told by an old man that he knew but of one instance in which a husband killed his wife for infidelity.

respective villages, and during the winter months seldom visit Fort George. But on the arrival of the spring and autumn brigades from the interior they pour in from all parts, and besiege our *voyageurs* much after the manner which their frail sisters at Portsmouth adopt when attacking the crews of a newly arrived India fleet. Mothers participate with their daughters in the proceeds arising from their prostitution ; and, in many instances, husbands share with their wives the wages of infamy. Disease is the natural consequence of this state of general demoralisation, and numbers of the unfortunate beings suffer dreadfully from the effects of their promiscuous intercourse.

Now that the North-west and Hudson's Bay Companies have become united, and that rivalry in trade cannot be brought forward as an excuse for corrupting Indians, it would be highly desirable that the missionaries would turn their thoughts to this remote and too long neglected corner of the globe. Their pious labours have already effected wonders in the comparatively small islands of the Pacific, where idolatry, human sacrifices, and other crimes more revolting to humanity, have

been abolished. I would therefore respectfully suggest to the consideration of the benevolent individuals who constitute the missionary societies, the propriety of extending the sphere of their exertions to the North-west coast of America, and from thence through the interior of that vast continent; the aboriginal inhabitants of which, with the exception of Canada and a very trifling part of the frontiers, are still buried in the deepest ignorance. During the period that France held possession of the Canadas the Jesuits made wonderful progress in converting the Indians, and most of the natives of the two provinces are now Christians. In my journey across the continent small wooden huts, ornamented with crucifixes and other symbols of Christianity, situated from five to seven hundred miles beyond the limits of civilisation were pointed out to me, which had been formerly inhabited by these enterprising missionaries in their progress through the wilderness. These dwellings are now deserted; but are still regarded with pious reverence by the thoughtless *voyageurs*: and even the poor Indians, who by the cessation of the Jesuit missions, have relapsed into their former habits, pay

the utmost respect to the houses, which were inhabited, as they say, by “the good white fathers, who, unlike other white men, never robbed or cheated them.” Since the annexation of Canada to the British crown Indian conversion has almost ceased ; or has made, at most, a slow and sickly progress. Their moral amelioration is completely neglected by both English and Americans ; and it is only in periods of war that we pay them any attention. The first settlers of the United States did not act so. They fought their way through the country with the Bible in one hand and the sword in the other ; and it was not until the former ceased to convince that recourse was had to the latter. Objectionable, however, as this system undoubtedly was, the plan adopted by the modern Americans is more so. Their anti-republican love of aggrandisement, by the continual extension of their territorial possessions, must sooner or later destroy the unity of their confederation ; and it is a subject deeply to be lamented that, in their gradual encroachments on the Indian lands, Christianity is forgotten, the word of God does not now, as in the time of their forefathers, keep in check the sanguinary sword

of man ; and extermination, instead of regeneration, seems to be their motto. To return to the Columbia. It is the only situation on the north-west coast, to the northward of California, free from danger ; and I have no doubt that by a proper application the Hudson's Bay Company, who have now possession of Fort George, would give a passage, and afford every facility to resident missionaries. Odious as the vices are to which I have referred, the few good qualities which the Indians possess would materially assist in bringing them to a knowledge of the true religion. Independently of the beneficial results which we might naturally expect to flow from their exertions among the natives, there is another consideration which induces me to think that the Company would, for its own interest, render them every assistance in its power. I allude to the situation of a number of men in its employment whose knowledge of Christianity, owing to a long absence from their native country, has fallen into a kind of abeyance, and which would undoubtedly be revived by the cheering presence of a minister of God. Cannibalism, although unknown among

the Indians of the Columbia, is practised by the savages on the coast to the northward of that river; so that by the progressive labours of the missionaries this dreadful custom, with the others, might be gradually abolished. The settlement formed by Lord Selkirk on Red River, which falls into the great Lake Winepic, and which suffered so much in its infancy from interested enemies, is at present, I am happy to hear, in a thriving condition. A missionary has been established here, whose labours have already been productive of much good. Numbers of the surrounding natives have become converts, and they are yearly increasing. The progress of civilisation will gradually gain ground among the western tribes; and we may indulge the pleasing hope that the day is not far distant when the missionaries, in their glorious career eastward and westward, from the St. Lawrence and the mouth of the Columbia, despite the many difficulties and dangers they must unavoidably encounter, may meet on the Rocky Mountains, and from their ice-covered summits proclaim to the benighted savages "Glory to God

in the highest, and on earth peace and good-will towards men."

About thirty years before this period the small-pox had committed dreadful ravages among these Indians, the vestiges of which were still visible on the countenances of the elderly men and women. It is believed in the north-west that this disease was wilfully introduced by the American traders among the Indians of the Missouri, as a short and easy method of reducing their numbers, and thereby destroying in a great measure their hostility to the whites. The Americans throw the blame on the French; while they in turn deny the foul imputation, and broadly charge the Spaniards as the original delinquents. Be this as it may, the disease first proceeded from the banks of the Missouri, and the British are free from having had any participation in the detestable act. It travelled with destructive rapidity as far north as Athabasca and the shores of the Great Slave Lake, crossed the Rocky Mountains at the sources of the Missouri, and having fastened its deadly venom on the Snake Indians, spread its

devastating course to the northward and westward, until its frightful progress was arrested by the Pacific Ocean. Some of the old *voyageurs* who were stationed at English River and Athabasca, when this scourge made its first appearance, give the most harrowing details of its ravages. The unfortunate Indians when in the height of the fever would plunge into a river, which generally caused instant death; and thousands of the miserable wretches by suicide anticipated its fatal termination. Whole villages were depopulated, and an old man well known in the Indian country, named Louis La Liberté, told me that one morning during its height he saw between two and three hundred bodies of men, women, and children, suspended from trees, close to an adjoining village of the Cree nation, the surviving inhabitants of which did not exceed forty persons. They believed that the "Great Master of Life had delivered them over to the Evil Spirit for their wicked courses;" and for many years afterwards those who escaped, or survived the deadly contagion, strictly conformed themselves to their own code of moral laws. The recollec-

tion of it, however, is now fast wearing away from their memory. Those who bore any traces of it are nearly extinct; and on the eastern side of the mountains, intoxication, and its attendant vices are becoming too prevalent. The western tribes still remember it with a superstitious dread, of which Mr. M'Dougall took advantage, when he learned that the Tonquin had been cut off. He assembled several of the chieftains, and showing them a small bottle, declared that it contained the small-pox; that although his force was weak in number, he was strong in medicine; and that in consequence of the treacherous cruelty of the Northern Indians, he would open the bottle and send the small-pox among them. The chiefs strongly remonstrated against his doing so. They told him that they and their relations were always friendly to the white people; that they would remain so; that if the small-pox was once let out, it would run like fire among the good people as well as among the bad; and that it was inconsistent with justice to punish friends for the crimes committed by enemies. Mr. M'Dougall appeared to be convinced by these reasons, and

promised, that if the white people were not attacked or robbed for the future, the fatal bottle should not be uncorked. He was greatly dreaded by the Indians, who were fully impressed with the idea that he held their fate in his hands, and they called him by way of pre-eminence, "the great small-pox chief."

An Indian belonging to a small tribe on the coast, to the southward of the Clatsops, occasionally visited the fort. He was a perfect *lusus naturæ*, and his history was rather curious. His skin was fair, his face partially freckled, and his hair quite red. He was about five feet ten inches high, was slender, but remarkably well made; his head had not undergone the flattening process; and he was called *Jack Ramsay*, in consequence of that name having been punctured on his left arm. The Indians allege that his father was an English sailor, who had deserted from a trading vessel, and had lived many years among their tribe, one of whom he married; that when Jack was born he insisted on preserving the child's head in its natural state, and while young had punctured the arm in the above manner. Old

Ramsay had died about twenty years before this period : he had several more children, but Jack was the only red-headed one among them. He was the only half-bred I ever saw with red hair, as that race in general partake of the swarthy hue derived from their maternal ancestors. Poor Jack was fond of his father's countrymen, and had the decency to wear trousers whenever he came to the fort. We therefore made a collection of old clothes for his use, sufficient to last him for many years.

The ideas of these Indians on the subject of a future state do not differ much from the opinions entertained by the natives of the interior. They believe that those who have not committed murder ; who have fulfilled the relative duties of son, father, and husband ; who have been good fishermen, &c., will after their death go to a place of happiness, in which they will find an abundant supply of fish, fruit, &c. ; while those who have followed a contrary course of life will be condemned to a cold and barren country, in which bitter fruits and salt water will form their principal means of subsistence. Mr. Franchère, who

was stationed permanently at Fort George, and who obtained an accurate knowledge of their language, &c., states they have a tradition relative to the origin of mankind, of which the following is the substance:—Man was at first created by a divinity named *Etalapass*; but he was originally imperfect. His mouth was not divided, his eyes were closed, and his hands and feet immoveable; in short, he was rather a statue of flesh than a living being. A second divinity, named *Ecannum*, less powerful than *Etalapass*, but more benevolent, seeing man in this imperfect state, took pity on him, and with a sharp stone opened his mouth, unclosed his eyes, and imparted motion to his hands and feet. Not satisfied with these gifts, the compassionate deity taught mankind how to make canoes, paddles, nets, and all their domestic utensils. He also overturned rocks into the rivers, which, by obstructing the progress of the fish through the waters, enabled them to take sufficient to satisfy their wants. We observed no idols among them; and although they had some small grotesque-looking figures, carved out of

wood, they seemed to pay them no respect, and often offered to barter them for trifles.

Civilised countries are not exempt from superstition ; it is therefore not surprising to find it exist among untutored savages. They believe that if salmon be cut cross-ways the fishery will be unproductive, and that a famine will follow. In the summer of 1811, they at first brought but a small quantity to the people who were then building the fort. As Mr. M'Dougall knew there was no scarcity, he reproached the chiefs for furnishing such a scanty supply : they admitted the charge, but assigned as a reason their fears that the white people would cut it the unlucky way. Mr. M'Dougall promised to follow their plan, upon which they brought a tolerable good quantity, but all roasted ; and which, in order to avoid displeasing them, our people were obliged to eat before sunset each day.

The negotiations preceding a marriage are short, and the ceremony itself simple. When a young man has made his choice, he commissions his parents or other relations to open the business to

the girl's relations. They are to receive a certain quantity of presents; and when these are agreed on, they all repair to the house intended for the future residence of the young couple, to which nearly all the inhabitants of the village are invited. The presents, which consist of slaves, axes, beads, kettles, *haiqua*, brass and copper bracelets, &c., are now distributed by the young man, who in his turn receives an equal or perhaps greater quantity, from the girl's relations. The bride, decorated with the various ornaments common among the tribe, is then led forth by a few old women, and presented to the bridegroom. He receives her as his wife; and the elders, after wishing them plenty of fish, fruit, roots, and children, retire from the house, accompanied by all the strangers. The marriage tie is not indissoluble. A man may repudiate his wife, who is then at liberty to take another husband. Infidelity is the general cause of these separations, which however are of rare occurrence.

A man may have as many wives as his means will permit him to keep. Some have four or five. They live together in the greatest harmony; and

although their lord may love one more than another, it causes no jealousy or disunion among the rest.

Many of these women, who have followed a depraved course of life before marriage, become excellent and faithful wives afterwards; an instance of which I shall here relate :—In the early part of this summer one of the clerks, who had been out on a trading excursion, happened to be present at a marriage in the Clatsop village. He was surprised at recognising in the bride an old *chère amie*, who the preceding year had spent three weeks with him in his tent, actually decorated with some of the baubles he had then given her. His eye caught hers for a moment; but his appearance excited not the least emotion, and she passed him by as one whom she had never seen. A few days afterwards she came to the fort accompanied by her husband and other Indians. She remained at the gate while the men were selling some fish in the trading store. Her old lover, observing her alone, attempted to renew their former acquaintance; but she betrayed no symptom of recognition, and in a cold distant manner told him to go about his business.

All the Indians on the Columbia entertain a strong aversion to ardent spirits, which they regard as poison. They allege that slaves only drink to excess ; and that drunkenness is degrading to free men. On one occasion some of the gentlemen at Fort George induced a son of Comcomly the chief to drink a few glasses of rum. Intoxication quickly followed, accompanied by sickness ; in which condition he returned home to his father's house, and for a couple of days remained in a state of stupor. The old chief subsequently reproached the people at the fort for having degraded his son by making him drunk, and thereby exposing him to the laughter of his slaves.

Each village is governed by its own chief. He possesses little authority, and is respected in proportion to the number of wives, slaves, &c., which he may keep. The greater number of these, the greater the chief. He is entitled, however, to considerable posthumous honour ; for at his death the tribe go into mourning by cutting their hair, and for some months continue to chant a kind of funeral dirge to his memory. As each village forms

a petty sovereignty, governed by independent chieftains, differences often arise between them. These differences are generally settled by giving compensation for the injury inflicted; but in the event of a serious offence, such as murder, (which is very rare,) or the abduction of a woman, (which is not uncommon,) the parties prepare for war.

The great mass of the American Indians, in their warlike encounters, fall suddenly on their enemies, and taking them unprepared, massacre or capture men, women, and children. The plan adopted by the Chinooks forms an honourable exception to this system. Having once determined on hostilities, they give notice to the enemy of the day on which they intend to make the attack; and having previously engaged as auxiliaries a number of young men whom they pay for that purpose, they embark in their canoes for the scene of action. Several of their women accompany them on these expeditions, and assist in working the canoes.

On arriving at the enemy's village they enter into a parley, and endeavour by negotiation to terminate the quarrel amicably. Sometimes a third

party, who preserves a strict neutrality, undertakes the office of mediator; but should their joint efforts fail in procuring redress, they immediately prepare for action. Should the day be far advanced, the combat is deferred, by mutual consent, till the following morning; and they pass the intervening night in frightful yells, and making use of abusive and insulting language to each other. They generally fight from their canoes, which they take care to incline to one side, presenting the higher flank to the enemy; and in this position, with their bodies quite bent, the battle commences. Owing to the cover of their canoes, and their impenetrable armour, it is seldom bloody; and as soon as one or two men fall, the party to whom they belonged acknowledge themselves vanquished, and the combat ceases. If the assailants be unsuccessful, they return without redress; but if conquerors, they receive various presents from the vanquished party in addition to their original demand. The women and children are always sent away before the engagement commences.

Their warlike weapons are the bow and arrow,

with a curious kind of short double-edged sword or club, two and a half feet in length by six inches in breadth. They seldom, however, fight near enough to make use of this formidable instrument.

Their armour consists of a shirt of elk-skin remarkably thick, doubled, and thrown over the shoulders, with holes for the arms. It descends to the ankles; and from the thickness of the leather is perfectly arrow-proof. The head is covered by a species of helmet made of cedar bark, bear grass, and leather, and is also impenetrable by arrows. The neck, therefore, is the only vital part of the body exposed to danger in action. In addition to the above they have another kind of armour, which they occasionally wear in place of the leathern shirt. It is a species of corset, formed of thin slips of hard wood ingeniously laced together by bear grass, and is much lighter and more pliable than the former; but it does not cover so much of the body. They have a few guns, which they seldom use. They are not good hunters; and their chief dependence for support is on the produce of the water. It is unnecessary to mention that in their

warlike expeditions their faces and bodies are painted in various colours, and with the most grotesque figures.

Their canoes are of various forms and sizes. The following description of the largest kind of these vessels I take from Lewis and Clarke. It is perfectly accurate, and more technical than I could give it. "They are upwards of fifty feet long, and will carry from eight to ten thousand pounds weight, or from twenty to thirty persons. Like all the canoes we have mentioned, they are cut out of a single trunk of a tree, which is generally white cedar, though the fir is sometimes used. The sides are secured by cross bars or round sticks, two or three inches in thickness, which are inserted through holes made just below the gunwales, and made fast with cords. The upper edge of the gunwale itself is about five-eighths of an inch thick, and four or five in breadth; and folds outwards so as to form a kind of rim, which prevents the water from beating into the boat. The bow and stern are about the same height, and each provided with a comb reaching to the bottom of the boat. At each end also are pedestals,

formed of the same solid piece, on which are placed strange grotesque figures of men or animals rising sometimes to the height of five feet, and composed of small pieces of wood firmly united, with great ingenuity, by inlaying and mortising, without a spike of any kind. The paddle is usually from four and a half to five feet in length; the handle being thick for one-third of its length, when it widens and is hollowed and thinned on each side of the centre, which forms a sort of rib. When they embark, one Indian sits in the stern and steers with a paddle; the others kneel in pairs in the bottom of the canoe, and sitting on their heels paddle over the gunwale next to them. In this way they ride with perfect safety the highest waves, and venture without the least concern in seas where other boats or seamen could not live an instant. They sit quietly and paddle, with no other movement, except when any large wave throws the boat on her side, and to the eye of the spectator she seems lost: the man to windward then steadies her by throwing his body towards the upper side, and sinking his paddle deep into the waves, appears to catch the water,

and force it under the boat, which the same stroke pushes on with great velocity.”

The description of their houses, and their manner of building them, I also extract from the same authority :

“ The houses in this neighbourhood are all large wooden buildings, varying in length from twenty to sixty feet, and from fourteen to twenty in width.* They are constructed in the following manner : Two or more posts of split timber, agreeably to the number of partitions, are sunk in the ground, above which they rise to the height of fourteen or eighteen feet. They are hollowed at the top so as to receive the ends of a round beam or pole, stretching from one end to the other, and forming the upper point of the roof for the whole extent of the building. On each side of this range is placed another, which forms the eaves of the house, and is about five feet high ; but as the building is often sunk to the depth of four or five feet, the eaves come very near the

* I have seen some of their houses upwards of 90 feet long, and from 30 to 40 broad.

surface of the earth. Smaller pieces of timber are now extended by pairs in the form of rafters, from the lower to the upper beam, where they are attached at both ends with cords of cedar bark. On these rafters two or three ranges of small poles are placed horizontally, and secured in the same way with strings of cedar bark. The sides are now made with a range of wide boards sunk a small distance into the ground, with the upper ends projecting above the poles at the eaves, to which they are secured by a beam passing outside, parallel with the eave poles, and tied by cords of cedar bark passing through holes made in the boards at certain distances. The gable ends and partitions are formed in the same way, being fastened by beams on the outside, parallel to the rafters. The roof is then covered with a double range of thin boards, except an aperture of two or three feet in the centre, for the smoke to pass through. The entrance is by a small hole cut out of the boards, and just large enough to admit the body. The very largest houses only are divided by partitions; for though three or more families reside in the same room, there is quite space enough for all of them.

“In the centre of each room is a space six or eight feet square, sunk to the depth of twelve inches below the rest of the floor, and enclosed by four pieces of square timber. Here they make the fire, for which purpose pine bark is generally preferred. Around this fire-place mats are spread, and serve as seats during the day, and very frequently as beds at night : there is however a more permanent bed made, by fixing in two, or sometimes three sides of the room, posts reaching from the roof down to the ground, and at the distance of four feet from the wall. From these posts to the wall itself one or two ranges of boards are placed, so as to form shelves, on which they either sleep, or stow their various articles of merchandise. The uncured fish is hung in the smoke of their fires, as is also the flesh of the elk, when they are fortunate enough to procure any, which is but rarely.”

Their culinary articles consist of a large square kettle made of cedar wood, a few platters made of ash, and awkward spoons made of the same material. Their mode of cooking is however more expeditious than ours. Having put a certain

quantity of water into the kettle, they throw in several hot stones, which quickly cause the water to boil; the fish or meat is then put in, and the steam is kept from evaporating by a small mat thrown over the kettle. By this system a large salmon will be boiled in less than twenty minutes, and meat in a proportionably short space of time. They are not scrupulously clean in their cooking. A kettle in which salmon is boiled in the morning may have elk dressed in it the same evening, and the following day be doomed to cook a dish of sturgeon, without being washed out, or scarcely rinsed. They occasionally roast both their meat and fish on small wooden *brochettes*, similar to those used by the upper Indians.

It will no doubt be regarded as a subject of surprise, that in felling the timber for their houses, and in the laborious operation of forming their canoes, they had not, previous to our arrival, an axe. Their only instruments consisted of a chisel generally formed out of an old file, a kind of oblong stone, which they used as a hammer, and a mallet made of spruce knot, well oiled and hardened by the action of fire. With these wretched

tools they cut down trees from thirty to forty feet in circumference ; and with unparalleled patience and perseverance continued their tedious and laborious undertaking until their domicile was roofed or their canoe fit to encounter the turbulent waves of the Columbia.

As their chief source of subsistence depends on their fisheries, they pay great attention to their nets, in the manufacture of which they exhibit their usual ingenuity. They occasionally fish with the hook and line. They make use of the common straight net, the scooping or dipping net, and the gig. Lewis and Clarke mention that “ the first is of different lengths and depths, and used in taking salmon, carr, and trout, in the deep inlets among the marshy grounds, and the mouths of deep creeks. The scooping net is used for small fish in the spring and summer season ; and in both kinds the net is formed of silk grass, or the bark of white cedar. The gig is used at all seasons, and for all kinds of fish they can procure with it ; so too is the hook and line ; of which the line is made of the same material as the net, and the hook generally brought by the traders ;

though before the whites came they made hooks out of two small pieces of bone, resembling the European hook, but with a much more acute angle, where the two pieces were joined."

Gambling is one of their most incorrigible vices; and so inveterately are they attached to it, that the unfortunate gamester often finds himself stripped of slaves, beads, *haiqua*, and even nets. Their common game is a simple kind of hazard. One man takes a small stone which he changes for some time from hand to hand, all the while humming a slow monotonous air. The bet is then made; and according as his adversary succeeds in guessing the hand in which the stone is concealed, he wins or loses. They seldom cheat; and submit to their losses with the most philosophical resignation.

Haiqua, which I have so often mentioned, is a white round shell of extreme hardness, varying from one to four inches in length, and from three-eighths to half an inch in circumference. It is hollow, slightly curved, and tapers a little towards the ends. These shells are highly estimated, the longest being the most valuable. They are found

in the neighbourhood of Nootka, and form an important article of local traffic. The Indians regulate the prices of their various articles by *haiqua* ; a fathom of the best description being equal in value to ten good beaver skins.

The most enlightened nations are inundated with charlatans: it is therefore not surprising they should flourish among rude barbarians. Every Indian village has its quack doctor ; or, as they call him, “ the strong man of medicine.” The moment a native is attacked with sickness, no matter of what description, the physician is sent for. He immediately commences operations by stretching the patient on his back ; while a number of his friends and relations surround him, each carrying a long and a short stick, with which they beat time to a mournful air which the doctor chants, and in which they join at intervals. Sometimes a slave is despatched to the roof of the house, which he belabours most energetically with his drum-sticks, joining at the same time with a loud voice the chorus inside. The man of medicine then kneels, and presses with all his force his two fists on the patient’s stomach. The un-

fortunate man, tortured with the pain produced by this violent operation, utters the most piercing cries ; but his voice is drowned by the doctor and the by-standers, who chant loud and louder still the mighty “ song of medicine.”

At the end of each stanza the operator seizes the patient's hands, which he joins together and blows on. He thus continues alternately pressing and blowing until a small white stone, which he had previously placed in the patient's mouth, is forced out. This he exhibits with a triumphant air to the man's relations ; and with all the confidence and pomposity of modern quackery, assures them the disease is destroyed, and that the patient must undoubtedly recover. Mr. Franchère states he has seen some of them carefully envelop the small stone, which they call the source of evil, in a piece of cedar bark, and throw it into the fire.

It frequently happens that a man, who might have been cured by a simple dose of medicine, is by this abominable system destroyed ; but whether recovery or death be the consequence, the quack is equally recompensed. Some of the more

intelligent undoubtedly perceive the imposition which these fellows practise ; but the great faith which the ignorant and superstitious multitude have in their skill deters any man from exposing their knavery. Latterly, however, numbers of their sick have applied for relief and assistance at Fort George ; and as our prescriptions have been generally attended with success, their belief in the infallibility of those jugglers has been considerably weakened.

From the doctor to death, the charlatan to the coffin, the transition is not unnatural. When a Chinook dies, it matters not whether from natural causes or the effects of quackery, his remains are deposited in a small canoe, the body being previously enveloped in skins or mats. His bow, arrows, and other articles, are laid by his side. The canoe is then placed on a high platform near the river's side, or on rocks out of the reach of the tide, and other mats tied over it. If the relations of the deceased can afford it, they place a larger canoe reversed over the one containing his body, and both are firmly tied together. His wives,

relatives, and slaves go into mourning by cutting their hair ; and for some time after his death repair twice a-day, at the rising and setting of the sun, to an adjoining wood to chant his funeral dirge.

CHAPTER XV.

Voyage to the interior—Party attacked, and one man killed—
Arrive at Spokane House—Joy of the Indians at our return—
The chief's speech—Sketch of Mr. M'Donald—Duel prevented between him and a chief—Kettle Indians; their surprise at seeing white men—Curious account of an hermaphrodite chief—Death of Jacques Hoole.

ON the 5th of August, 1814, we left Fort George. Our party, including proprietors and clerks, consisted of sixty men in nine heavily loaded canoes. We arrived early the third day at the foot of the rapids. It was here our men had been robbed the preceding autumn; and here also Mr. Stewart's party had been attacked, and himself wounded the following winter. We therefore

took more than usual precautions, and formed a strong guard to protect the carriers. The natives were numerous, but evinced no disposition to be troublesome. As the chief did not appear with the flag, a party proceeded to the village and inquired for him. They were told he was absent from home. The Indian whom we suspected of having fired at Michel was also invisible. Their non-appearance looked rather suspicious, and induced us to be doubly cautious. By hard labour we finished the portage in one day, and encamped at the upper end. We arranged the goods and canoes in such a manner as to prevent a surprise, and the whole party was divided into two watches. At intervals during the night we heard footsteps among the rocks, and in the woods; but it passed over quietly, and at day-break we commenced reloading. A few of the natives came to us unarmed, and brought with them some fish and roots, which we purchased; and having distributed some tobacco among them, pushed off. The day after we reached the narrows and falls in safety. When the last portage had been nearly finished numbers of the Eneeshurs collected about us, and

became very troublesome. They made several attempts to pilfer, and we were constrained to use some violence to keep them in check. We asked repeatedly for the chief; but were answered that he was in the plains hunting: this we did not believe, and finding that they still persevered in seizing every loose article they could pick up, we were obliged to order corporal punishment to be inflicted on three of the ringleaders. They went away followed by a numerous party of their friends. Their looks betokened revenge; and the few who remained told us to be on our guard, as they heard the others talking in a threatening manner. We therefore reloaded quickly, and crossed over to the opposite side. It was high and rocky, and possessed many points from which an enemy could attack us with effect. The day-light was fast receding; every one lent a hand to work the canoes, and still no place presented itself at which we could land with safety. With much difficulty and labour we at length reached the long rocky island already mentioned; and as it was then quite dark, we had no alternative but to land in a small sandy bay surrounded by high craggy rocks, of

which the island was chiefly composed. We could not procure any wood, and were obliged to dine and sup on some cold boiled rice which had been left from morning. It was judged advisable not to pitch the tents; and we slept on the beach behind the bales and cases of merchandise in rather an irregular manner. The first watch, to which I belonged, passed over tranquilly; and we retired to sleep at midnight, on being relieved by the second.

Our repose was not of long continuance. About half an hour before day-break the cry of *Les sauvages nous flèchent ! Les sauvages nous flèchent !** rung in our ears, followed by the report of several shots. Every man instantly seized his arms, and we discharged a volley at a rocky eminence which commanded the little bay, and from which the enemy had fired down on our sentinels. This dislodged the savages; but owing to the darkness of the morning, and our ignorance of the interior of the island, we did not think it prudent to pursue them.

It was impossible to ascertain whether any of

* The savages are shooting at us with arrows.

our balls had taken effect on the enemy ; and apprehensive of another attack in a spot so badly calculated for defence, and in which we were completely exposed, orders were given to load the canoes. In the hurry attendant upon this operation we did not at first miss one of our men, named Baptiste L'Amoureux, whom we found lying wounded at the farther end of the bay, at which he had been posted as a sentinel. His moans conducted us to the spot. A ball had passed through his left breast, and came out near the shoulder. Every assistance was rendered him, but in vain ; he never uttered a word ; and ere the morning dawned he had ceased to breathe. We did not before imagine these savages had any fire-arms among them ; but this event showed we had been mistaken.

No other fatality occurred, although several of the party had wonderful escapes. An arrow passed through the collar of one man's coat, and the nightcap of another was pierced through. Mr. La Rocque and I slept together, and an arrow penetrated six inches into the ground between our necks. Our safety may in a great degree be

attributed to a number of the arrows having been intercepted by the bales and cases of trading goods.

The canoes were quickly loaded, and at day-break we pushed off from this dangerous spot. As we paddled up the south side of the river some arrows were discharged at us from the island. We fired a few shots in return ; but from the manner the assailants were covered, we conjectured our balls fell harmless.

On nearing the upper end of the island, we caught a passing view of forty or fifty of the savages not more than two hundred yards distant. Orders were immediately given to those who had their guns ready to fire ; but before a trigger was pulled they had vanished. We landed at the spot ; and a few of us, who ascended the rocks, observed them at a considerable distance running like hunted deer. We discharged a few random shots after them, upon which we re-embarked, and proceeded on our voyage. At half past eight we put ashore at a low sandy point covered with willows and cotton wood, for the purpose of breakfasting and interring the body of L'Amou-

reux. The men were immediately set to work to dig a grave, into which were lowered the remains of the unfortunate Canadian. A few short prayers were said in French; and after the earth was thrown in, to a level with the surface, it was covered over with dry sand in such a manner as to keep the natives in ignorance of the occurrence.

We remained here a few hours to refit, at the end of which we resumed our journey. We saw no Indians during the remainder of the day, and encamped late on a low stony island, above a rapid, on which we found plenty of drift wood. The following day we passed a few villages of the friendly tribes, from whom we purchased some horses for the kettle. From hence to the Wallah Wallahs, with whom we stopped one day, nothing particular occurred. They received us in their usual friendly manner; and on inquiring from them to what tribe the Indians belonged who had given my small party such a chase the preceding autumn, they replied that they were relatives of the man who had been hanged by Mr. Clarke on Lewis River, and were part of the Upper Nez

Percés ; that they were very bad people, much addicted to thieving, and that we should be very cautious how we fell in their way, as they had vowed to kill a white man as a satisfaction for the death of their relation.

We met a few of the Nez Percés at the mouth of Lewis River : they appeared friendly, and sold us some horses. From this place nothing particular occurred until the 23d of August, on which day we arrived at Oakinagan. The news of the attack had preceded us, accompanied by the usual exaggerations of Indians. Mr. Ross, who was in charge of that establishment, informed us that the first intelligence he received stated that ten white men and twenty Indians had been killed. By other accounts our loss was varied from fifteen to twenty, and one statement destroyed half the party, and sent the remainder back to the sea, with the loss of all the goods.

From this place Mr. Keith proceeded with dispatches to the other side of the mountains ; and the various parties separated for their summer destinations. Mine was Spokane House, in company with Messrs. Stewart, M'Millan, and M'Do-

nald. We left Oakinagan on the 27th, and reached Spokane on the 31st of August. The trading goods had been exhausted long before, and the Indians had been upwards of two months without ammunition. Our arrival therefore was hailed with great joy.

The whole tribe assembled round the fort, and viewed with delight the kegs of powder and the bales of tobacco as they were unloaded from the horses. A large circle was formed in the court-yard, into the centre of which we entered; and having lit the friendly calumet, smoked a few rounds to celebrate the meeting. A quantity of tobacco was then presented to each of the men, and the chief delivered a long oration; part of which, addressing us, ran as follows:—

“ My heart is glad to see you : my heart is glad to see you. We were a long time very hungry for tobacco ; and some of our young men said you would never come back. They were angry, and said to me, ‘ The white men made us love tobacco almost as much as we love our children, and now we are starving for it. They brought us their wonderful guns, which we traded from them ;

we threw by our arrows as useless, because we knew they were not so strong to kill the deer as the guns; and now we are idle, with our guns, as the white men have no fire-powder, or balls, to give us, and we have broken our arrows, and almost forgotten how to use them: the white men are very bad, and have deceived us.' But I spoke to them, and I said, You are fools; you have no patience. The white men's big canoes are a long time coming over the Stinking Lake* that divides their country from ours. They told me on going away that they would come back, and I know they would not tell lies." Then turning to his countrymen, he continued, "Did I not tell you that the white men would not tell lies? You are fools, great fools, and have no patience. Let us now show our joy at meeting our friends; and tomorrow let all our hunters go into the plains, and up the hills, and kill birds and deer for the good white men." They then commenced dancing, jumping, and crying out in a most discordant manner,

* The sea. So called from its saline qualities.

The good white men, the good white men,
Our hearts are glad for the good white men.
The good white men, the good white men,
Dance and sing for the good white men.

Then giving three cheers, something like the
“ Hip, hip, hurra !” of our domestic bacchanalians, they retired to the village.

The next morning the hunters procured a fresh stock of ammunition, and, for some weeks following, our table was plentifully supplied with excellent grouse, wild geese, and ducks, in prime order. We had planted the year before some turnips, potatoes, cabbage, and other esculents, which yielded a pretty good crop. The quantity was increased the following spring ; and this autumn we had an abundance of these vegetables. We had brought up a cock, three hens, three goats, and three hogs. The Indians were quite astonished at beholding them. They called the fowl “ the white men’s grouse ;” the goats were denominated “ the white men’s deer ;” and the swine, “ the white men’s bears.” They inquired if animals of the above description were all tame in our country ; and on being answered in the affirma-

tive, they asked, if they caught some of those to which they compared them, could we tame them in a similar manner? we told them to catch a few young ones, and we would make the attempt. A young bear was shortly secured: he was tied in the sty with the pigs, and fed daily by one of our Canadians, of whom he became very fond, and who in a short time taught him to dance, beg, and play many tricks, which delighted the Indians exceedingly.

While we were here a curious incident occurred between Mr. M'Donald and an Indian, which I shall preface by a short account of the former. He belonged to a highly respectable family which emigrated from Inverness-shire to Canada while he was a lad. His first accents were lisped in Gaelic; but in the capital of the Highlands, so celebrated for its pure English, he made considerable progress in our language. On arriving in Canada he was obliged to learn French, in which he had made some proficiency, when he joined the North-west Company as an apprentice-clerk. At the period I speak of he had been ten years absent from Canada, and had travelled over an

immense extent of Indian country. He seldom remained more than one winter at any particular place, and had a greater facility of acquiring than of retaining the language of the various tribes with whom he came in contact. He was subject to temporary fits of abstraction, during which the country of his auditory was forgotten, and their lingual knowledge set at defiance by the most strange and ludicrous *mélange* of Gaelic, English, French, and half a dozen Indian dialects. Whenever any thing occurred to ruffle his temper, it was highly amusing to hear him give vent to his passion in *Diaouls*, *God d—s*, *Sacres*, and invocations of the “evil spirit” in Indian: he was however a good-natured, inoffensive companion, easily irritated, and as easily appeased. His appearance was very striking: in height he was six feet four inches, with broad shoulders, large bushy whiskers, and red hair, which for some years had not felt the scissors, and which sometimes falling over his face and shoulders, gave to his countenance a wild and uncouth appearance. He had taken a Spokane wife, by whom he had two children. A great portion of his leisure time was spent in the

company of her relations, by whom, and indeed by the Indians in general, he was highly beloved: their affection however was chastened by a moderate degree of fear, with which his gigantic body and indomitable bravery inspired them.

One day as we were sitting down to dinner, one of our men, followed by a native, rushed into the dining-room, and requested we would instantly repair to the village to prevent bloodshed, as Mr. M'Donald was about to fight a duel with one of the chiefs. We ran to the scene of action, and found our friend surrounded by a number of Indians, all of whom kept at a respectful distance. He had his fowling-piece, which he changed from one hand to the other, and appeared violently chafed. The chief stood about twenty yards from him, and the following colloquy took place between them, which, for the information of my *unlearned* readers, I shall translate.

M'D.—“Come on, now, you rascal! you toad! you dog! Will you fight?”

Indian.—“I will:—but you 're a foolish man. A chief should not be passionate. I always thought the white chiefs were wise men.”

M'D.—“ I want none of your jaw : I say you cheated me. You 're a dog ! *Will* you fight ? ”

Indian.—“ You are not wise. You get angry like a woman ; but I will fight. Let us go to the wood. Are you ready ? ”

M'D.—“ Why, you d—d rascal, what do you mean ? I'll fight you here. Take your distance like a brave man, face to face, and we 'll draw lots for the first shot, or fire together, whichever you please.”

Indian.—“ You are a greater fool than I thought you were. Who ever heard of a wise warrior standing before his enemy's gun to be shot at like a dog ? No one but a fool of a white man would do so.”

M'D.—“ What do you mean ? What *way* do you want to fight ? ”

Indian.—“ The way that all red warriors fight. Let us take our guns, and retire to yonder wood ; place yourself behind one tree, and I will take my stand behind another, and then we shall see who will shoot the other first ! ”

M'D.—“ You are afraid, and you 're a coward.”

Indian.—“ I am not afraid ; and you 're a fool.”

M'D.—Come then, d—n my eyes if I care. Here's at you your own way." And he was about proceeding to the wood, when we interfered, had the combatants disarmed, and after much entreaty induced our brave Gael to return to the fort.

The quarrel originated in a gambling transaction, in which M'Donald imagined he had been cheated, and under that impression struck the chief, and called him a rogue. The latter told him he took advantage of his size and strength, and that he would not meet him on equal terms with his gun. This imputation roused all his ire. He instantly darted into the field with his fowling-piece, followed by the chief, when by our arrival we prevented an encounter which in all probability would have proved fatal to our friend.

The gigantic figure, long red flowing locks, foaming mouth, and violent gesticulation of M'Donald, presented a striking and characteristic contrast to the calm and immutable features of the chieftain. His inflexible countenance was, for a moment, disturbed by something like a smile, when he told his opponent that no one but a fool

would stand before a gun to be shot at like a dog. In fact, M'Donald's proposition appeared to him so much at variance with his received notions of wisdom, that he could not comprehend how any man in his senses could make such an offer. On explaining to him afterwards the *civilised* mode of deciding gentlemanly quarrels, he manifested the utmost incredulity, and declared that he could not conceive how people so wise in other respects, should be guilty of such foolishness. But when we assured him in the most positive manner that we were stating facts, he shook his head, and said, "I see plainly there are fools every where."

M'Donald was a most extraordinary and original character. To the gentleness of a lamb he united the courage of a lion. He was particularly affectionate to men of small size, whether equals or inferiors, and would stand their bantering with the utmost good-humour; but if any man approaching his own altitude presumed to encroach too far on his good-nature, a lowering look and distended nostrils warned the intruder of an approaching eruption.

One of our Canadian *voyageurs*, named Bazil Lucie, a remarkably strong man, about six feet three inches high, with a muscular frame, and buffalo neck, once said something which he thought bordered on disrespect. Any man under five feet ten might have made use of the same language with impunity, but from such a man as Lucie, who was a kind of bully over his comrades, it could not be borne; he accordingly told him to hold his tongue, and threatened to chastise him if he said another word. This was said before several of the men, and Lucie replied by saying that he might thank the situation he held for his safety, or he should have satisfaction *sur le champ*. M'Donald instantly fired, and asked him if he would fight with musket, sword, or pistol; but Lucie declared he had no notion of fighting in that manner, adding that his only weapons were his fists. The pugnacious Celt resolving not to leave him any chance of escape, stripped off his coat, called him *un enfant de chienne*, and challenged him to fight *comme un polisson*. Lucie immediately obeyed the call, and to work they fell. I was not present at the combat; but

some of the men told me that in less than ten minutes Basil was completely disabled, and was unfit to work for some weeks after.

M'Donald frequently, for the mere love of fighting, accompanied the Flat-heads in their war excursions against the Black-feet. His eminent bravery endeared him to the whole tribe, and in all matters relating to warfare his word was a law. The following anecdote, which was related to me by several Indians, will at once show his steady courage and recklessness of danger. In the summer of 1812, at the buffalo plains they fell in with a strong party of the Black-feet, and a severe contest ensued. M'Donald was to be seen in every direction in the hottest of the fire cheering and animating his friends; and they at length succeeded in driving the Black-feet to take shelter in a thick cluster of trees, from whence they kept up a constant and galling fire on the Flat-heads, by which a few were killed, and several wounded. In vain he exerted all his influence to induce his friends to storm the trees, and drive the enemy from their cover.

Their mode of attack was extremely foolish, and

productive of no benefit ; for each warrior advanced opposite to the spot from whence the Black-feet fired, and after discharging a random shot into the group of trees, instantly galloped away. M'Donald, vexed at this puerile method of fighting, offered to take the lead himself to dislodge the enemy ; but, with the exception of the war-chief, they all refused to join him. He therefore resolved to try the effect of example, and putting his horse into a smart trot, rode opposite to the place from whence the chief fire of the Black-feet proceeded : he then dismounted, took a deliberate aim at the head of a fellow which had just popped from behind a tree, and let fly. The bullet entered the Black-foot's mouth, and he fell. A shower of balls instantly whizzed about M'Donald and his horse ; but he, undismayed, reloaded, while his friends cried out and besought him to retire. He covered another in the same manner, who also fell, after which he calmly remounted, and galloped to his party uninjured. A prisoner, who was subsequently taken, declared that the only two killed of those who had taken refuge among the trees, were both shot in the head by the "big

white chief," as they termed our friend. His friends at Forts des Prairies repeatedly wrote to him that the Black-feet complained greatly of his having joined the Flat-heads, who had, by his assistance and that of Michel, become powerful, and that they vowed vengeance against them if ever they fell in their way; but M'Donald paid no attention either to their warning or our entreaties. War was his glory, and "piping peace" his aversion. Up to the period I quitted the Columbia he escaped harmless; but I regret to state that a few years afterwards, one of the enemy's balls brought him to the ground: half-a-dozen savages instantly rushed on him, and commenced hacking his skull with their tomahawks: the scalping-knife was in the act of beginning its dreadful operation, and in a moment all would have been over, had not the war-chief, accompanied by a few friends, dashed to his assistance, killed three of the Black-feet, and rescued their benefactor from impending death. He subsequently recovered; but I understand the wounds he then received have left evident traces of their violence on his bold and manly front.

About seven hundred miles from Fort George, and ninety from Spokan House, there is an immense fall in the Columbia, between sixty and seventy feet perpendicular, at low water, and about forty-five in the spring and early part of the summer, when the melting of the snow contributes to swell the mighty torrent. The basin at the foot of the cascade resembles a boiling cauldron, in consequence of which the fall is called "La Chaudière." A small tribe, called "Les Chaudières," reside at this place : their village is situated on the north side, just below the fall, where they remain the greater part of the year. They take little beaver ; but their lands are well stocked with game and fish ; there is also abundance of wild fruit, such as choke-cherries, currants, small strawberries, with black and blue berries. They take vast quantities of salmon, which they dry and preserve for use during the winter and spring months. Cleanliness cannot be ranked amongst their virtues. Their habitations are filthy in the extreme, and the surrounding atmosphere is impregnated with the most noxious effluvia, produced by the piscatory

offals which lie scattered about their dwellings. I visited their village in September in company with my friend M'Donald, his wife, some of her relations, and two of our own men. They received us in a friendly manner, and treated us to abundance of roast and boiled salmon. A small branch of this tribe reside in the interior, about a day and a half's march to the northward. A family of them, consisting of a father, mother, and several children, arrived at the falls the day before us. They had never seen white men, and their astonishment was extreme at the great contrast exhibited between the tall raw-boned figure, and flowing red hair of my friend, compared to the cropped head, John-Bullish face, low, and somewhat corpulent person of the author. The old woman requested to see my arms uncovered; and having gratified her, she begged to see my breast. I accordingly opened my shirt, and she at length became satisfied that the skin was all white, of which she appeared previously to entertain some doubts. Her curiosity was next directed to what she looked upon as the superna-

tural colour of M'Donald's hair, and expressed a wish to have a close examination of it: he complied, and having sat down, she commenced an inquisitorial search about its radical terminations, after certain animalculi which shall be nameless. She appeared much disappointed at not finding a solitary "ferlie," the absence of which she attributed to the extraordinary colour of his hair, which she said frightened them away. Then turning to me, and observing mine was of a darker hue, she asked if I would allow her to take a "look." I immediately consented; but her eyes and digits having for some time toiled in vain, she appeared annoyed at her want of success, and rose up quite vexed, declaring we were altogether "too clean."

We visited a small tribe, consisting of not more than fifteen families, who occupied a few hunting lodges about midway between Spokane House and the Chaudière falls: their language is a dialect of that spoken by the natives of the above places, but approaching more nearly to the Spokane. Their immediate lands consist of beautiful open prairies, bounded by clear woods, and interspersed with

small rivulets and lakes. The latter are visited in the autumnal months by numbers of wild-geese and ducks, and their hills are well stocked with grouse. They are an inoffensive race, and received us with every demonstration of friendship. We remained a week among them, during which period we had excellent sport. The aquatic birds were large and fat; and the grouse much beyond ours in size; and so tame, that they seldom took wing until we approached within a few yards of them.

The chief of this tribe is an extraordinary being. The Indians allege that he belongs to the episcene gender. He wears a woman's dress, overloaded with a profusion of beads, thimbles, and small shells; add to which, the upper part of the face and the manner of wearing the hair are quite feminine; but these appearances are more than counterbalanced by a rough beard, and a masculine tone of voice, which would seem to set his virility beyond dispute. He never gambles, or associates with either sex, and he is regarded with a certain portion of fear and awe by both men and

women, who look upon him as something more than human. He has a calm and rather stern countenance, and I never observed any tendency towards a relaxation of his risible muscles. He is usually attended by two or three children, to whom he pays great attention. Their chief occupation is to catch his horses, collect provisions, make fires, and cook his meals. When they attain a proper age, he gives them a portion, gets them married, and dismisses them; after which he selects from the largest and poorest families a fresh set of juvenile domestics: their parents make no opposition, and are glad to get them so well provided for.

This chief possesses a large number of horses, some of which are the finest in the country. We purchased a few, and found him liberal in his dealings. He is free from the canting hypocrisy so common among Indians; and if he finds any of his young attendants tell a lie, or prevaricate in the least, the offender is punished by a flogging and sent home, after which no consideration whatever would induce him to take back the delinquent.

He seldom visited our fort; but whenever we called on him we were received with a degree of courteous hospitality which I never experienced elsewhere. He was communicative, and inquisitive, and ridiculed the follies of the Indians in the most philosophical manner. Of these he inveighed principally against gambling, and their improvident thoughtlessness in neglecting to provide during the summer and autumnal months a sufficient quantity of dried salmon for the spring, which is the season of scarcity; by which neglect they have been frequently reduced to starvation. He had heard of M'Donald's quarrel with the Indian, which he adduced as one of the bad effects resulting from gambling, and added, "had the Spokan been mad enough to follow the foolish custom of your countrymen, it is probable one of you would have been killed about a foolish dispute arising out of a bad practice, which every wise man should avoid."

He inquired particularly about our form of government, laws, customs, marriages, our ideas of a future life, &c. Our answers proved generally satisfactory; but the only two things he could

not reconcile to wisdom, was the law of primogeniture and the custom of duelling: the first, he said, was gross injustice; and he thought no one but a man bereft of his senses could be guilty of the latter. Our knowledge of his language was necessarily imperfect, owing to which the attempts I made to explain to him some of the abstruse doctrines of our religion were rather bungling; but he appeared much pleased whenever he ascertained that he comprehended what I wished to convey; and, at the conclusion of our discourse, said he would be glad to converse with some of the wise men we call priests on these matters, and more particularly on the subject of a future state.

He is fond of tobacco; and the Indians say they often see him sitting late at night, enjoying his calumet at the door of his tent, and observing the various revolutions in the firmament. On all subjects therefore connected with the changes of weather his opinion is deemed oracular, and I understand he is seldom or never mistaken in his prognostications.

Although clothed in the garments of a female,

I have hitherto classed this uncommon being among the masculine portion of the human race; and from his muscular frame, bushy beard, and strong decided tone of voice, I conceive myself justified in so doing. I never saw him angry but once, and that was occasioned by observing some private whispering and tittering going on in his presence, which he suspected had some allusion to his doubtful gender. His countenance instantly assumed a savage fierceness; but he quickly regained his composure on finding the supposed offenders had changed their conduct.

His dwelling was covered with large deer-skins, and was completely water-proof. The interior was remarkably clean, and spread over with mats. In one corner he had a stock of dried provisions, stored in leather and mat bags, which in periods of scarcity he shared liberally among the tribe; in fact he wanted nothing that could add to his happiness or comfort, and possessed a degree of calm contentment uncommon among savages, and which would put to the blush much of the philosophical wisdom of civilised man.

While preparing for our autumnal journey to the sea, we learned that one of our free hunters, named Jacques Hoole, had been murdered by the Black-feet. His too was a character *hors du commun*. He was a native of France, and had been a soldier. He began his military career in Scotland in 1745, was slightly wounded and made prisoner at Culloden: after being exchanged he was sent to Canada, and was actively engaged in the old American war. He was present in the battle on Abraham's Plains, when the gallant Wolfe lost his life, and was one of the men who assisted in carrying the Marquis de Montcalm into Quebec, after he had received his death-wound.

The conquest of Canada induced him to quit the army: he married and became a farmer. On the revolutionary war breaking out, the gallant veteran bade adieu to the plough, became a sergeant of militia, and for the second time stood the siege of Quebec; in a sortie from which he received a wound in the knee, which caused a slight lameness during the remainder of his life.

On the termination of the war, misfortunes came crowding on him. The republicans had destroyed his farm; his wife proved faithless, and his children disobedient. He therefore determined to proceed with some traders to the interior of the Indian country. He would not engage in the service of the Company, but preferred trapping beaver on his own account, which he afterwards disposed of at the nearest trading post. This extraordinary old man was ninety-two years of age at the period of his death. I saw him the year before, and he then possessed much of the lightness and elasticity of youth, with all the volatility of a Frenchman. His only luxury was tobacco, of which he consumed an incredible quantity. From his great age he was called "Père Hoole." The Canadians treated him with much respect, and their common salutation of "*Bon jour, père,*" was answered by "*Merci, Merci, mon fils.*" His body was found by the Flat-heads, close to a beaver dam:—a ball had penetrated his temples, and the few white hairs that remained on his aged head did not prevent his inhuman butchers from stripping it of

scalp. His clothes remained on him; but his horses, traps, and arms had been taken by the murderers.

END OF VOL. I.

